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THE
PRINT-COLLECTOR'S HANDBOOK

MRS. CARNAC
(From the Mezzotint by J. Raphael Smith, after Sir J. Reynolds, 1778)

BY ALFRED WHITE

LONDON

1902

THE

PRINT-COLLECTOR'S HANDBOOK

BY ALFRED WHITMAN

OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS BRITISH MUSEUM

WITH EIGHTY ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

GEORGE BELL & SONS

1902

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PREFACE

In the following pages an attempt is made to supply answers to some of the many questions that a number of years' experience has shown to be those most frequently asked by amateurs at the commencement of their print-collecting, and even by those who have devoted some time and attention to the pursuit of their hobby.

In consequence of the limitation of a single volume like the present one, it has been thought best to refrain from commenting upon the etchings and engravings of living artists whose place in art is not yet definitely fixed.

Most of the illustrations have been made by the half-tone process; but in order that collectors may more closely examine the actual technique of the different methods of engraving, specimens of the various styles have been reproduced in collotype. In this latter process no screen or visible foreign grain intervenes to impair or destroy the texture of the original work, and the results are therefore as faithful as a mechanical process will yield. These collotype reproductions can be easily identified by reference to the List of Illustrations.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Mr. Gustave Mayer for his valuable help in the preparation of the chapter on the money value of prints; and during the progress of the work the writer has consulted the British Museum publications; Mr. Laurence Binyon's 'Dutch Etchers of the Seven-

teenth Century'; Mr. Lionel Cust's 'The Engravings of Albrecht Dürer'; Mrs. Frankau's 'Eighteenth Century Colour Prints'; Mr. F. Wedmore's 'Fine Prints'; and Mr. J. H. Slater's 'Engravings and their Value.'

The half-tone reproductions have been prepared by Messrs. Walker & Cockerell, and the collotype illustrations by Mr. J. Hyatt.

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PRINT-COLLECTOR'S HANDBOOK

CHAPTER I

HINTS TO BEGINNERS

To collect is a universal instinct that in a boy begins to assert itself the first day he possesses a pocket, and develops with the years. As manhood approaches, marbles, tops, and other juvenile acquisitions lose their charm, and objects of beauty, of artistic value, or of historical importance take their place. Among the many fields that display their attractions to the view of the would-be collector, perhaps the most fascinating, and the one that brings the best faculties of the amateur most into play, is that of collecting prints. In forming his cabinet his artistic and intellectual tastes will have free course, and not only will he acquire knowledge of the history of art, the painter's as well as the engraver's, but he will furbish up his acquaintance with the history of nations which perchance may have been getting rusty.

In the present chapter we shall suppose the reader to desire to become a print-collector; but, being a beginner, and his knowledge of the subject being limited to the printsellers' windows, he will be in need of advice as to how he shall proceed, how he shall judge an old print, and how he shall detect impostures. He will also

require information upon many other points. To answer these needs, and to lead the amateur along the first few steps of the right path, is the task to which we shall first address ourselves.

That print-collecting is a hobby well worthy the close attention of the amateur will very soon be evident, for the importance of the engraver's art cannot be over-estimated. If no engravings existed, how little should we know of the paintings, or places, or peoples of the world, notwithstanding the modern facilities for travel. But in beginning to collect specimens, the amateur will be assailed by many questions, to which answers must be found. How is he to know one kind of print from another—a line engraving from an etching, a mezzotint from an aquatint? How is the quality of an impression to be judged? What is the difference between a first and a second state? How can a modern reprint be detected? How is a colour-print produced? How can he tell whether a print is genuine? These are some of the questions to answer which help will be required.

As in other branches of learning, a little knowledge of print-collecting and judging may be a dangerous thing; for in these days of photographic reproduction and skilful deception, many are the pitfalls into which an amateur may be led. Even as far back as 1769, when he had finished his "Biographical History of England" as set forth by the vast assemblage of engraved portraits, the Rev. J. Granger, the distinguished amateur, writing to Horace Walpole on the subject of his task, said, 'I was not sufficiently informed of my ignorance when I undertook it'; while recently an expert remarked, 'Twenty years ago, in the buoyancy of youth, I would

STATE I

EQUESTRIAN PORTRAIT

(From the Line Engraving by Pierre Lombart, after Vandyck)

have passed opinions upon prints without any misgivings, whereas now, after years of study, I approach the subject with far more hesitation.' Therefore let the beginner proceed cautiously.

As the literature at the disposal of the print-collector is very rich, some books being devoted to the subject generally and others to individual masters or schools, no one will expect, within the compass of a single volume, more than leading principles and general hints, though it is hoped that in this chapter enough will be said to give the beginner a fair start. As an indication of the wide range that will quickly open out, let the amateur take a print into his hands and consider the number of questions that will suggest themselves to him. What is the style of engraving—line, stipple, mezzotint, or etching? What do we know of the artist who painted the original picture? What do we know of the engraver or etcher? If it is a portrait, what do we know of the person represented? If it is a sacred composition, where is the original painting to be found? With these and other questions crowding upon him, he will begin to realise the breadth of the interesting domain into which his hobby will lead him.

Now, what has the beginner to do first of all, what is his first step to be? He must commence by acquiring an elementary knowledge of the technique and peculiarities of the various styles of engraving; and the illustrations to the present chapter have been selected so as to at once place these different qualities before him. But we will describe the illustrations later. Then he must learn something of the principal engravers, their style of engraving, the kind of work to which they devoted themselves, and when and where they lived. Soon he will find the engravers sorting themselves into groups

and schools, and he will begin to associate styles of engraving with the places where they were mostly practised—etching with Holland, line engraving with France and Belgium, mezzotint with England. Side by side with this preliminary study, a practical acquaintance should be obtained of the prints themselves, in museums, sale-rooms, exhibitions, and shop windows. Not until a general rudimentary knowledge of the subject has been gained should purchases be made.

Having obtained a bird's-eye view of engravings and their scope, the collector will next have to consider what branch of the subject he shall make particularly his own, and what borders he shall give to the field of his study; for it is necessary to say with emphasis that he should collect with a definite purpose and not buy prints haphazard. Shall he take a school or a period; a class of prints, such as portraits; a method of engraving, as stipple; shall he select an engraver and try to get together a complete collection of prints from the plates he engraved; shall he take a painter and collect engravings after his pictures; shall he collect original work, as etching; or translated work, as line or mezzotint engraving; or shall he follow the fashion of the hour and make a collection of prints in colour? Each of these divisions has its devotees, and all amateurs will associate Lord Cheylesmore's name with mezzotints, Mr. W. G. Rawlinson's with prints after J. M. W. Turner, and Mrs. Julia Frankau's with engravings printed in colours. The subject of engraving is so vast that it will be by far the best for the collector to confine his attention to some special division that he believes will be most congenial to him and most in accordance with his tastes and purse.

THE THREE TREES

(*From the Etching by Rembrandt*, 1643)

Being to some extent equipped for the pursuit of his hobby, the amateur must now, with caution, approach the matter of buying, and in doing so let him remember that though volumes be written on the subject, everyone in the long run must be taught by experience, and no one can expect to be invariably successful. For example, to be a competent judge of the etchings of Rembrandt one needs years of study among the prints themselves. As has been truly said, 'To expect knowledge without study is just as sensible as to expect a ship to sail without a rudder.'

When the amateur enters a shop to buy a print, he should always have his magnifying glass with him, and he should examine the print by good searching daylight and subject it to two fundamental tests: the condition of the metal plate at the time the impression he is holding was printed, and the condition of the impression itself. First, as to the condition of the metal plate. The would-be purchaser must satisfy himself from the quality of the impression that the metal plate had not become worn at the time of printing, or, in other words, that the impression is an early one. If it is a figure subject, then the fine and delicate parts of the flesh, as on the cheeks and bosom, must not have lost their modelling and become flat, the subject as a whole must retain the relative lights and shades he would expect the engraver to mean it should possess, the fine lines, though delicate, must be sound and sharp, and the shadows rich and full. Then he must examine the print to find out whether at the time of printing, the plate had been retouched. It was a frequent custom, after a number of impressions had been printed from a plate and the engraved or etched lines had lost their sharpness, to return

it to the engraver who produced it, or, if years had passed by, to his successor, to be retouched. The engraver would take his tools and go over the plate to strengthen the parts that had become weak and indistinct with the wear of printing, or, in the case of an etching, the parts that had lost their original effect would be re-etched. The collector must therefore be on his guard against worn and reworked plates, and as a rule must decline to purchase prints that betray these qualities. In many cases this reworking can be detected, for the renewed parts are thereby brought into undue prominence, so that the balance of the picture is lost. Frequently in impressions from retouched plates of portraits, inharmonious outlines obtrude themselves in the features and in details of the dress. When the collector has satisfied himself that the plate was in a good state of preservation at the time of printing, that it had not been retouched, and that the wear and tear of printing had not made itself manifest, then he must turn to the second fundamental test—the quality of the impression or print.

The impression should bear evidence that it has been carefully preserved; but the purchaser must be careful to ascertain that a good appearance has not been obtained at the expense of over-cleaning and restoring. Also it must be free from the effects of rubbing, by which its brilliant pristine quality may have been impaired or ruined. It must not have been 'backed'—that is, pasted down upon another piece of paper, nor must it have been 'laid down' upon cardboard; but must be just as it was taken from the printing-press.

The possible buyer should hold the print up to the light to examine the texture of the paper,

L'ABSIDE DE NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS

(*From the Etching by Charles Méryon*, 1854)

for by this means repairs are frequently detected; and he must be cautioned against buying prints in which holes and tears (except in a minor and quite unimportant degree) have been repaired by inlaying patches of paper, upon which the lost portions of the engraving have been made good by strokes of a pen. This work, which to a small extent may be justifiable, is sometimes done on a large scale and with great skill, so that a keen eye is required to detect it. If the print is framed, it should always be taken out for examination before purchasing, as a frame may cover a multitude of sins; and the buyer should not be put off his guard by an old frame. It may seem curious to have to write in this strain, warning the beginner to be so much on the alert against deception; but while our leading dealers are men of integrity and of high repute, unfortunately experience proves it necessary to give these cautions and advice.

Then there is the ordeal by touch; for the feel of the paper is an important aid in judging the genuineness of a print. For example, the paper of the eighteenth century is generally of a soft and somewhat silky texture, while that used in more modern times is hard and harsh. These differences to the touch, in the paper, however, cannot be satisfactorily explained in black and white, but the collector, by experience, will soon appreciate the importance of the test. The mere fact however that the paper is old is not a sufficient guarantee that the impression is old, for it not unfrequently happens that an old plate has escaped destruction, and old paper being still at times procurable, the result is a modern impression of an old plate on old paper. Again, an impression produced by copper-plate printing must necessarily

present a surface that is more or less rough, so that the finger moved lightly across it can detect a surface akin to that of the page of a book used by the blind, though, of course, only in a microscopic degree. Should it happen that a reputed copper-plate print presents a polished flat surface, there is a chance that the impression has been either very much restored and pressed or that it is a photographic reproduction.

Now we come to the question of margin, about which much has been said and written. It is most desirable that a print should have a good margin, but to pay large prices solely on this account is simply to exercise a fad. If the margin of a print has been well preserved, it is reasonable to expect that the print itself has been the object of tender treatment, and the wide margin making it possible to handle a print without touching its engraved surface adds yet another chance for its preservation; but beyond points such as these it is not wise to carry the value of margin. The more modern a print is, the more margin one is likely to find; but the older it is, the more must the margin be expected to have decreased, without serious loss in value. Thus, many of the choicest and most expensive Rembrandt etchings and Dürer engravings have but very little margin.

Further, if the collector comes across a fine old print with a wide margin, he must carefully examine whether this margin be genuine. It is by no means unusual to find old prints with apparently good margins which upon close and critical inspection turn out to be false. The print, really clipped close to the work, has been carefully and cleverly inlaid into a frame of paper closely resembling that of the print, and a fraudulent wide margin has thus been secured. Therefore,

JOHN DRYDEN

(From the Line Engraving by Gérard Edelinck after Kneller)

buyers must beware, lest prints with spurious margins find their way into their portfolios.

Here it may be well to put in two qualifications, or we may be misunderstood. It must not be thought from what has been said that the art of the print cleaner and restorer is a fraudulent one, for, on the contrary, every collector is constantly and legitimately in need of his services. We are simply endeavouring to inform the amateur of work that is sometimes done for the purpose of deception, and so to caution him against traps that sometimes catch the unwary. The second qualification is upon the subject of retouched plates. While in a very high proportion of cases the quality of a plate seriously deteriorates under the hand of a retoucher, and the collector should therefore, as a rule, shun impressions printed after the rework, still there are instances in which plates have been reworked by skilful and well-known men, with the result that they have been improved rather than weakened. John Smith, the engraver at the early part of the eighteenth century, well illustrates this point. Many plates, by a number of engravers, notably by Isaac Beckett, passed into his hands to be reworked and strengthened, and these, when reissued, were if anything in better condition than when they left the original engravers.

Only those who have been present while the amateur is buying prints or showing his purchases to his friends, can know how many are the pitfalls into which he is liable to slip. When he has a little technical experience, the question of the 'plate mark' presents a difficulty by no means easy of solution. He knows that an impression from a copper or steel plate can be recognised by the plate mark or indentation that surrounds

the impression at a short distance from the subject, and that indicates the boundaries of the sheet of metal from which the subject was printed, and so he naturally expects to find a plate mark upon every steel or copper plate impression he meets with. But from time to time he sees prints (especially those of about the second and third decades of the nineteenth century) which bear the undoubted appearance of steel or copper plate impressions and yet have no plate marks. He is therefore in a dilemma which he cannot solve to his satisfaction. The solution, however, is a simple one. The illustrations to such works as Rogers's Poems and Scott's Novels were engraved on plates larger than the pages of the books; so that when the impressions were cut down for the purposes of binding, the plate marks were shorn off. Hence their disappearance. Again, if the reader will take his visiting card he will find it shows no plate marks upon it, but in this instance it is because the card is smaller than the copper-plate from which it was printed.

Before deciding upon a purchase, it is always well, where convenient, to consult a catalogue in which the print is described and the states are set forth; and it is also a good plan, where possible, to compare the print under consideration with another impression. If the beginner could go to some public collection and carefully compare and study a series of impressions from one plate which records its history from the first state to the last, he would receive a most excellent education, which would help greatly to the training of his eye in the matter of quality of impression, and would serve him in good stead when deciding upon his purchases. In buying,

THE NATIVITY

(*From the Line Engraving by Albrecht Dürer*, 1504)

SOUTHWARK FAIR

(From the Line Engraving by William Hogarth after a Painting by himself, 1733)

it is a good rule for the collector to satisfy himself that the print is well worth acquiring before ascertaining whether it is rare. He should not be misled into buying simply from such statements as 'scarce,' 'rare,' etc., but the purchase should be provisionally decided by the qualities and merits of the print itself. The amateur should collect to enjoy and not merely to possess; and although specialising is strongly to be recommended, as already stated, he should not slavishly limit his field, but be always ready to accept a really good print that offers itself if it can be bought at a reasonable price.

We have used the expression 'state,' but so far we have given no explanation of the word. The term is used often enough, but many who dabble in prints have vague ideas as to its meaning. It is by no means unusual to be asked, 'How do you know the first state from, say, a third or fourth?' a parallel question to which might very well be, 'How do you know the eldest from the youngest of a family?' The answer to each question would be the same: 'By comparison and general knowledge.' The states represent the different stages through which a plate passes in the course of its history.

During the time a plate is in the hands of the engraver an impression is occasionally printed, so that the craftsman may judge of the progress of his work. These impressions from the unfinished plate should not rank as states, but 'engravers' progress proofs.' When the engraving is finished then the states begin to count, but their order and number are matters to be settled in the case of each particular plate, according to the circumstances of the case and according to the custom of the artists. Rembrandt's plates have many

states, Lucas van Leyden's but few. Let us suppose the history of a plate. When it leaves the hands of the engraver and passes on to the printer, a batch of proofs—before any inscription or lettering—is printed off, constituting the 'first state'; then an inscription is added to the copper and a further batch of impressions is taken, forming the 'second state'; afterwards the plate meets with an accident and has to be returned to the engraver to be repaired, and impressions taken after this repair constitute another 'state.' And so the number of states may be few or many, according to the vicissitudes of the plate.

From this explanation it will be seen that the changes which constitute 'states' take place either in the inscription or in the work upon the subject. We will therefore give an actual example of each kind which, it is hoped, will make the matter quite clear. The portrait of Guillaume de Brisacier, by Antoine Masson (see p. 46), exists in four states, all of which concern the lettering round the oval. In the *first state*, an impression of which we have used, there is no lettering at all; in the *second* the legend *Gvillavme de Brisasier Segretaire des Commandemens de la Reyne* 1664 has been engraved; in the *third state* the spelling of the surname has been corrected from *Brisasier* to *Brisacier*; and in the *fourth* the word *Segretaire* has been corrected to *Secretaire.* Impressions are known in each of these four states.

The example we have chosen to illustrate the states of a plate caused by alterations in the work upon the subject, forms an interesting story of the changes of political opinion in England during the disturbed times from Charles I. to James II. We reproduce the whole of the plate

LADY CATHERINE PELHAM CLINTON

(*From the Mezzotint by John Raphael Smith after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1782)

from an impression in the first state (see p. 2), and the head portion only from impressions in each of the four succeeding states. The plate was engraved by Pierre Lombart, the eminent French engraver who worked in this country; and it was a made-up composition after Vandyck, for no single painting by that artist exists exactly corresponding to the plate. It was a portrait, but of whom? In the *first state* we see the head portion left blank as some public event had probably occurred to stop the progress of the plate as originally intended. Possibly the portrait was first meant to be Charles I., but that monarch becoming unpopular, the publication of his portrait might have been a failure. It is doubtful, however, if this impression we call the first state was actually the first, for there are traces of earlier work which appear to have been removed. In the *second state* a head has been etched in in outline, but the identity of the personage has not been established. In the *third state* the head of Cromwell appears, and the sash passing from the left shoulder to the right hip has been removed, and placed round the waist instead. In the *next state* the head of Cromwell has given place to one of Charles I.; and in the *fifth*, Charles's head has fallen and a second and older head of Cromwell with less hair has been substituted. The plate underwent other changes, but the above are quite sufficient for the present purpose, and we could hardly have chosen a more instructive example to illustrate the states of a plate caused by changes in the work upon the subject.

'Remarque proofs' are those, early ones, in which a vignette more or less appropriate to the subject of the print is found in the inscription space, with very little or no lettering; and

upon 'artists' proofs' the autographs of the artists generally appear, written in pencil.

These remarks bring forth another word of warning, this time on the subject of 'false proofs.' It was sometimes a practice, principally towards the end of the eighteenth century, to place a narrow strip of paper across the inscription space of the copper after the plate had been inked, so as to mask over the lettering before passing the plate through the press. By this means a fraudulent impression was obtained which at first sight has the appearance of a 'proof before letters.' The device is ingenious, but it is scarcely likely to deceive the amateur who is aware of the practice, for the strip of paper causes a crease across the impression of this spurious proof just below the subject, which can readily be seen. But here it must be observed that this custom of 'masking out' was not invariably done dishonestly, for one or two engravers—particularly Charles Turner, the mezzotinter—made a frequent practice of taking one or more masked impressions immediately upon the completion of a plate before the inscription portion was cleaned and prepared for the lettering engraver. In these instances the 'masked proofs,' instead of being late and worn spurious impressions, are really the finest that exist. So, although a 'false proof' should be regarded with great suspicion, it must not be rejected without a careful examination of the engraved work.

The purpose underlying the selection of the illustrations that have been chosen to accompany this initial chapter (except the series of states of the frequently altered portrait), is to set forth the four principal methods of work—etching, line-engraving, mezzotint, and stipple—so as, at once, to familiarise the reader with the different technical

LADY CAROLINE PRICE

(From the Mezzotint by John Jones after Sir J. Reynolds, 1788)

qualities of the various styles of engraving. Well-known examples have been selected in order that the amateur, when he sees the reproductions, may recognise them and recall the appearance and character of the original prints from which they have been photographed. In the mechanical process of reproduction by the half-tone method the actual technique of the original engravings is necessarily more or less lost; and the delicate copper-plate hand printing having to give place to the steam printing machine severely handicaps the result. To counteract this loss, a number of the illustrations throughout the book have been reproduced in collotype, and the reader is now invited to examine them carefully. They can readily be found by a reference to the list of illustrations.

The illustration seen at p. 4 is taken from Rembrandt's famous etching of *The Three Trees*; and the next is reproduced from an exceedingly rare fine impression of the etching *L'Abside de Notre-Dame de Paris*, the masterpiece of Charles Méryon, a father of modern etching, produced in the year 1853. It has been said that Méryon himself was paid 1s. 3d. (a franc and a half) for an impression which to-day might realise £130. In the process of etching, a copper-plate is coated with wax, and then the lines of the subject are drawn through this wax ground to the surface of the plate with a needle, and afterwards submitted to the action of acid. If these etched lines are examined with a magnifying glass it will be observed that they retain all the freedom of strokes drawn with a pencil or pen. This quality is a characteristic feature of etched work. The portrait of *John Dryden*, engraved by Gérard Edelinck, from the painting by Kneller, seen in the third illustration (see p. 8),

the exquisitely engraved *Nativity*, by Albrecht Dürer, the chief of the German School, produced in the year 1504, in the fourth, and the less refined though admirable and important *Southwark Fair*, 'Invented, Painted and Engrav'd by Wm. Hogarth, 1733,' in the fifth, have been reproduced from line engravings. In this method the lines are made by a tool (a kind of chisel called a graver), which is firmly held with its handle in the palm of the hand, and the strokes are made by pushing the graver along and into the bare metal plate. In this way it will be understood that the lines or strokes must be of quite a different character from those of an etching, that they must lose much of their freedom, and become more regular. A comparison of the illustrations of these two styles will show what is meant. In the sixth illustration (see p. 12) we have a reproduction from the mezzotint of *Lady Pelham Clinton feeding Chickens*, 1782, engraved by John Raphael Smith, after Sir Joshua Reynolds, and in the following one, one of the charming portrait of *Lady Caroline Price*, 1788, by John Jones, after the same painter. This style of engraving is produced in a manner altogether distinct from those of the first two. The surface of the copper-plate is first uniformly roughened and ploughed over with an instrument called a rocker, a process which is termed laying the mezzotint ground. If printed from after this 'grounding' has been completed, the plate would yield a perfectly black impression; but by means of tools the mezzotinter scrapes away more or less of this roughened surface, and so gradually develops his subject with its delicate gradations of light and shade, until in the end he obtains finished engravings such as we have reproduced, though the reproductions cannot do justice to the

LADY RUSHOUT AND DAUGHTER

(*From the Stipple Engraving by Thomas Burke after Angelica Kauffmann*, 1784)

ANGELS' HEADS (MISS FRANCES GORDON)

(From the Stipple Engraving by Pierre Simon after Sir J. Reynolds, 1789)

original prints. The eighth illustration (see p. 16), *Lady Rushout and Daughter*, 1784, engraved by Thomas Burke, after Angelica Kauffmann, and the last, *Angels' Heads*, 1789, by Pierre Simon, after Sir Joshua Reynolds, are from stipple engravings. In stipple engraving the result is produced by dots of varying degrees of strength, some engraved and some etched upon the copper-plate. The foregoing explanations, in a brief general manner, will indicate the styles of the leading methods of engraving and the various ways by which the different textures and techniques are produced; but we shall recur again to each, and describe the chief characteristics more in detail, in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

ETCHING

ALTHOUGH line engraving was flourishing early in the sixteenth century, while the great epoch for etching was not until a century later, still we think it will be better to familiarise ourselves with etching first, for we shall find when we come to discuss line engraving that, as a rule, the preliminary work upon the plate was done by etching. Etching is believed to have been used in the work of the mediæval goldsmiths, and in the ornamentation of swords and armour; and although it was during the early part of the sixteenth century that the process was first employed for producing impressions from etched plates upon paper, the great development of the art was reserved for the seventeenth.

But we will first endeavour to answer the questions, What is an etching? and how is one produced? As a fact, almost every schoolboy, at some time, has been an amateur etcher; for when he became the happy possessor of a knife, and covered the large blade with soap so that he could scratch his name through it on to the surface of the metal, and afterwards submitted these scratched lines to the action of acid to make them permanent, he was really practising etching. The professional etcher first covers the surface of his copper plate with a thin coating of wax ground, and then

REMBRANDT LEANING ON A STONE SILL
(From the Etching by Rembrandt, 1639)

SPECIMEN OF ETCHED WORK, FROM THE PORTRAIT OF REMBRANDT

(*Enlarged to twice the scale of the original Etching*)

through this ground he draws the subject he requires with a needle, or other sharp-pointed instrument, and thus lays bare upon the metal the lines that in the impression are to appear black. Then having protected the back and edges of the plate with a coating of Brunswick black, he immerses it in a bath of acid, when the mordant at once bites into the exposed lines, but cannot attack the portions covered by the wax. When the distance and other parts that need to be treated lightly have been sufficiently bitten, the plate is withdrawn from the bath, so that these light portions may be painted over with varnish to preserve them from further action of the acid, and the plate is again immersed. The processes of biting and 'stopping out' are several times repeated until the darkest lines have been sufficiently bitten, when the wax is removed and the plate is ready for the printer.

It will be seen that these simple technicalities make etching eminently suitable to the artist to express his own pictorial thoughts through the medium of copper plate and paper; for no lengthy apprenticeship to the engraver's trade is required. Other methods may be better for the interpretation of pictures by the great masters, but etching is exceptionally fitted for the personal spontaneous expression of the artist's own conceptions. By this direct communication between the artist and his admirer, an intimacy is established which brings the amateur face to face, as it were, with the master's mind, for no agent, or middleman, stands between. Hence the deservedly high position etching holds among the graphic arts at the present day, and the fascination it rightly exerts over collectors. Looking at an etching, say by Rembrandt, we can fancy ourselves glancing over the artist's shoulder as he uses the needle, and hearing him discourse on his

work. And it is worth remembering, by the way, that though this great master painted many pictures and etched many plates, the sister arts were practised almost entirely independently of each other.

Soft ground etchings, familiar to collectors in the Drawing Books of Samuel Prout of about 1820, and in some of the rustic subjects after George Morland, are produced in the following manner. A soft wax ground, as the name of the style implies, is first laid upon the copper, and over this ground is placed a piece of smooth thin writing-paper which is pasted down at the edges. The artist then draws his subject upon the writing-paper with a very soft lead pencil, pressing lightly or heavily according as he requires the strength of his lines to appear in the printed impression. When the drawing is finished he carefully lifts the paper from the plate, and finds that the wax ground has adhered to the paper in all the places where the paper has been touched by the lines of the pencil, and that in the corresponding parts of the plate the surface of the metal has been left more or less exposed. The process of biting is then proceeded with in the ordinary way, and the printed impression has the appearance of a crayon drawing. Soft ground etchings were much in vogue during the first decades of the nineteenth century, but the advancement in the art of lithography drove them from the field.

To attempt to deal with Rembrandt and his wonderful genius as an etcher, or to discourse upon the wide range and marvellous power of his work, is beyond the scope of the present volume; and of the books that have been devoted to this chief of all etchers we recommend the collector to commence with the late Mr. P. G. Hamerton's 'The Etchings of Rembrandt,' published some

PORTRAIT OF VANDYCK

(*From the Etching by himself, about* 1635)

six or seven years ago. Rembrandt, who died in 1669, at the age of 63, having had his share of the bitterness as well as of the sweetness of life, has been described by Mr. Colvin as 'a true Dutchman, resolute to see and interpret the world according to his own vision of it, observing northern nature with a northern eye, and not attempting to imitate the Greek or Italian grace of grouping or perfection of physical type; but investing life as he saw it, and the past as he imagined it, with an essential poetry of his own.' His work divides itself into three periods and styles: an early period when his achievements were mainly the product of pure etching (1628-1639), a middle period when etched work and dry-point work were combined (1640-1649), and a third period when dry-point work largely superseded the bitten line (1650-1661). The cost of Rembrandt etchings will be alluded to in the chapter on the money value of prints.

We have already illustrated Rembrandt's etched work by giving, in the first chapter, a reproduction from his famous landscape, *The Three Trees* (see p. 4), and now we exhibit (see p. 18) the well-known portrait of himself, richly dressed and leaning on a stone sill, produced in the year 1639, just before he made it his custom to add the dry-point work to stimulate and enrich the purely etched or bitten lines. The illustration has been made by the collotype process so as to give as faithful a rendering as possible; and in order that the reader may the more closely study the essential qualities of etched work, we give, with it, a reproduction of the face portion only, enlarged to twice the scale of the original etching. Very little explanation is needed; but the amateur will notice that the lines have freedom of movement, as though made with a pen

or sharply-pointed pencil—a quality that no other process of engraving can give; that each line is of the same thickness throughout—that is to say, has no gradation; and that the strokes have the inspiration of the master's touch, each one being made with a definite purpose. A short study of this enlargement will enable the amateur to distinguish an etched plate from an engraving in line, stipple, or any other method.

Before leaving Rembrandt's work, it is necessary to add that many of his plates have been copied by his imitators with surprising and wonderful fidelity of line, so that the collector must be most careful lest in buying, as he supposes, genuine Rembrandts he is acquiring only copies. But Mr. Middleton-Wake's and Dmitri Rovinski's catalogues, among others, will come to his aid, for therein the copies are mentioned, and their differences from the original etchings carefully pointed out.

Dry-point work, to which we have alluded, is performed by simply scratching the needle into the copper plate, without the assistance of etching-ground or acid. The needle used in this way raises what is termed a 'burr' on each side of the line (a phenomenon the reader can illustrate for himself by scratching a candle with a pin), and this burr, being of a jagged nature, retains a large proportion of ink in printing, and so imparts a rich velvety quality to the impression. A print abounding in burr is therefore highly prized; and, moreover, as it is of a fragile nature it quickly wears away, and impressions 'rich in burr' are exceedingly rare.

The printing of etchings is by no means an ordinary trade task, but one requiring a true artistic instinct; because much can be accomplished, in the way of adding richness and depth to the

DANCE IN A TAVERN

(From the Etching by Adriaen van Ostade)

impression, by 'mere printing.' For this reason many artists have preferred to print their own plates.

As the term 'etching' is still from time to time misapplied, let us say that an etching is not a drawing. The term etching for a pen-and-ink sketch may be the survival of the language used by the drawing-master of the 'ladies' polite academy,' but it is not correct. The word *etch* is of Teutonic origin, and means to eat or to bite.

Though Italy can claim among its practitioners of the seventeenth century such illustrious names as Lodovico and Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni, and Guercino, it was in Holland that the art of etching principally flourished, and among its masters the chief (besides Rembrandt) were Ferdinand Bol, Jan Livens, and Van Vliet — his immediate pupils and followers, Ostade, Everdingen, Seghers, Zeeman, Du Jardin, and Paul Potter. During the same period, however, Italy gave the world Stefano della Bella; Bohemia, Hollar; and France, Claude, Callot, and Abraham Bosse.

In Belgium, etching did not find much favour, for the great school of line engravers trained by Rubens for the interpretation of his own paintings (see p. 47) helped largely to discourage and shut out the art of the etcher. In fact, it may be said that Vandyck was the only great Flemish artist who practised etching, and even he did not work upon more than twenty plates. But impressions of these etchings in the first state—that is, containing the work of Vandyck only upon them—are of the greatest rarity, and are eagerly sought for by collectors. Almost all the subjects are portraits of famous men; and Vandyck's personal work upon the plates was

limited to the head, the other portions being left to accomplished engravers. From this series we select for reproduction Vandyck's own portrait in the rare first state; and it will be noticed that while the style of work varies greatly from that of Rembrandt, the lines having less freedom, yet it has power and directness all its own. A few years after Vandyck's death in 1641, the plate was completed by Jacob Neeffs, who added a bust, and placed it upon a round pedestal. At Sir Seymour Haden's sale, in 1891, an impression from this plate in the first state realised £60.

In Holland, line-engraving was but little cultivated; and instead, etching obtained an abundant entrance, and was practised and developed to a far greater extent than in any other art centre of Europe, the period of greatest work—both in quantity and quality—being from about 1630 to 1670. Among Dutch etchers one naturally thinks first (after Rembrandt) of Adriaen van Ostade, who was born at Haarlem in 1610. Though in easy circumstances, he was content to stay in his native country, and by means of his copper plates to mirror the peasant life around him in his own inimitable manner. Ostade etched about fifty plates, and the first states are not always the best, as he at times retouched and improved the coppers. But, on the other hand, the late states, issued after Ostade's death, are to be avoided on account of the unskilful reworking upon them. His work is not uniformly of the highest quality, so it will not be necessary for the collector to endeavour to possess a complete series of the etchings, but a selection of them will be sufficient. Among the best plates are *Saying Grace*, *A Peasant paying his Score*, *A Woman singing*, *The Knifegrinder*, *The Hunchback Fiddler*, and

A WOMAN SPINNING

(*From the Etching by Adriaen van Ostade*, 1652)

The Family. Besides these are the two we have reproduced: the second and more finished state of *The Dance in a Tavern*, Ostade's largest plate, representing a scene of true Dutch spirit and sentiment, and one the artist had doubtless frequently witnessed, and the first state of *A Woman spinning*, probably Ostade's finest performance in etching, a subject bathed in sunshine, and glowing in the warmth of a summer afternoon.

Ostade's pupils include Cornelis Dusart and Cornelis Bega, who, though they followed in the footsteps of their master, fell far short of the excellence he attained.

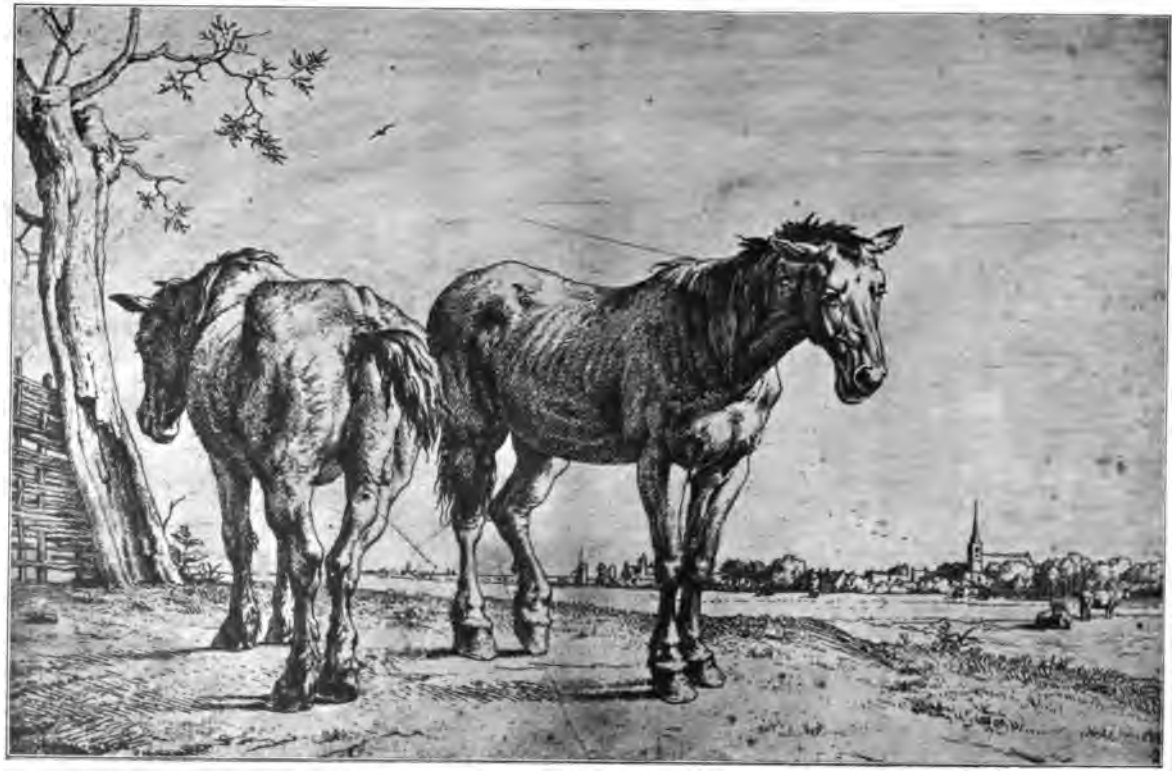
Turning to the landscape phase of Dutch etching, we come first to Hercules Seghers, whose methods and effects were admired and studied by Rembrandt. Seghers' etchings are rare; and they have secured an honoured place in the history of the graphic arts, as they show forth the first attempts in colour-printing from copper plates. To obtain his results Seghers used but one plate for each subject, and the printing was done in only one colour; but the effects were enhanced by the use of coloured papers, and sometimes he tinted the papers or added colour to the impressions by hand. In several instances impressions exist from the same plate varying in colour and effect. Seghers was born about 1590, and lived to the age of about fifty; and his etchings comprise chiefly hilly landscapes or landscapes with wide horizons, the latter showing the value of straight lines in depicting broad stretches of flat country.

Working about the same time as Seghers were the brothers Jan and Esaias van de Velde. In the twelve etchings of *The Months* by Jan, the severe characteristics of Dutch art have full play;

and the heavy etching combined with graver work may be traced to the influence of his study under Jacob Matham, the line engraver. The *Highway Robbery* betrays some of the mechanical mannerisms of line in the masses of foliage, and a stiffness in the action of the figures. The landscapes by Esaias, on the other hand, have a much freer and more natural rendering. In the impressions of the three *Views in the Bosch at the Hague*, by Roeland Roghman (after the plates had been retouched by Pieter Nolpe), the texture of the foliage has been tenderly portrayed, with a pleasing play of light among the branches of the trees.

Allardt van Everdingen, who died in 1675, introduced a new type of landscape into Holland as the outcome of a visit to Norway. He was first a painter of marine subjects, and while extending his art knowledge by following the avocation of a sailor, a storm drove his ship to Norway, where he resided for a time, making sketches of the scenery around him. Returning to Haarlem by the year 1646, he produced a number of etchings of Norwegian landscapes which, by their novelty in the eyes of the Dutch, accustomed to their own flat country, quickly gained popularity and soon became a fashion. Everdingen's influence is noticeable to a marked degree in the etchings of trees and woodland scenery by Jacob van Ruysdael, which, in the first states, are very rare.

The great naval power of Holland in the seventeenth century found expression in the etchings by Reynier Zeeman and Ludolph Bakhuysen. These two artists produced a number of battle pieces, views of shipping, etc., which are interesting both as works of art and as records of history.



THE TWO PLOUGH HORSES

(*From the Etching by Paul Potter*, 1652)

In the British Museum is a fine large water-colour drawing by Bakhuysen, dated 1702, giving a panorama of Amsterdam, and said to have been made as a present for the Czar, Peter the Great, and in commemoration of his second visit to that port.

The work by a number of Dutch artists shows strongly the result of Italian influence, and among the etchers of this group are Jan Both, whose landscapes give an impression of dulness, and whose figure subjects lack vitality; Karel du Jardin, an admirable etcher, who is seen at his best in landscape, or in animal subjects having a large proportion of landscape; and Nicolaes Berchem, some of whose early etchings, such as *The Shepherd sitting by a Fountain* (Bartsch 8), give the impression that they might be the artist's sketches made under the influence and inspiration of the hour, or that they are the rapid record of changing scenes.

The only other Dutch seventeenth-century etcher we can mention here is one, in some respects as important as any—Paul Potter—who studied horses and cattle in the calm and quiet of the pasture, and who has fixed for all time their attitudes and expressions when undisturbed by man. Potter, who died in 1654, at the age of twenty-nine, etched less than twenty plates; but they are all important, and the collector should, as far as possible, secure first states. The set of eight subjects of cows shows the artist's most intimate knowledge of cattle life and his wonderful skill in depicting it; and the same may be said of the set of horse subjects which appears to relate the stages in the career of a horse from the well-groomed *Friesland Horse* in the first etching (Bartsch 9), to *The Old Hack and*

the Dead Horse (Bartsch 13), in the fifth. From this series we reproduce *Two Plough Horses* (Bartsch 12), which at a superficial glance simply depicts two poor worn-out creatures very near their end. But note what Mr. Binyon, whose delightful book* we strongly recommend to the collector of Dutch etchings, and to which the writer is much indebted for some of the facts given above, writes concerning these two horses: 'By some magic of sympathy Potter makes us feel the ache of their limbs, stiff with fatigue, just as he expresses the patience in their eyes. Yet, tender as is the feeling of the drawing, it is so restrained that "pity" seems a word out of place. It is rather the simple articulation by means of sensitive portrayal, of an else inarticulate pathos. Such drawing as this is in a true sense imaginative.'

By far the most industrious etcher and engraver of the seventeenth century was undoubtedly Wenceslaus Hollar, whose catalogued plates, chiefly etched, but sometimes engraved in line, reach the enormous total of 2733, and include religious and historical subjects, portraits, topography, costumes, etc. Born at Prague, where the authorities are now bringing together as large a collection of his works as possible, he came to England with the Earl of Arundel in 1637, and died here on 28th March 1677, in the seventieth year of his age. Though not the subjects a collector might desire most, the prints perhaps chiefly consulted are those of London and provincial topography, and they are regarded as monuments of accuracy. An industrious and admirable artist, Hollar was however poorly remunerated for his work, and four-

* 'Dutch Etchers of the Seventeenth Century,' by Laurence Binyon. 1895.

JEWEL OF THE XVIth AND WATCH OF THE XVIIth CENTURIES

(*From the Etching by Jules Jacquemart*, 1866)

pence an hour has been mentioned as the price of his labour.

Claude, the most famous of French landscape painters, studied at Rome and Florence, and etched a small number of landscape plates between the years 1630 and 1663, which, though they do not display a complete mastery of technical methods, show the classic influence of his training, and possess the artistic qualities one would expect to find in such a celebrated painter. Callot, another French artist who worked in Italy, gave a powerful stimulus to the art of etching, and produced some plates of great merit, many of the subjects being on a minute scale yet crowded with figures. Although not expensive, these etchings are in demand on account of their dexterous handling; and perhaps the best known set is the one of *The Miseries of War*. Callot died in 1635, at the age of forty-three. Abraham Bosse, the third Frenchman we have named, was working some years later than Callot, and was an etcher whose manner was much more severe, and whose work was more nearly allied to that of the line engraver. By way of set-off to Claude and Callot—Frenchmen who studied in Italy—we have Stefano della Bella, a Florentine, who worked in France, and who etched subjects for packs of educational playing-cards, it is said (though with little reason), for the purpose of teaching the young king, Louis XIV., history, mythology, and geography. This artist etched a large number of plates displaying great power of drawing and freedom of touch.

Goya, the Spaniard, whose weird etchings were produced at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, will require the attention of the collector, who will be able

to study a large collection of his work, including *The Caprices*, in the British Museum Print Room.

With the advent of the eighteenth century the art of the etcher fell into disuse, or was only employed upon second-rate imitative work; and the nineteenth dawned ere new life became apparent. Mr. Hamerton, in his 'Graphic Arts,' tells us: 'For a long time before the modern revival of etching, it was treated with a degree of contempt which is hardly imaginable now. People could not be induced to look at etchings.' Though there were signs of an awakening in England during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century, it is to France that one must turn for the first distinct rays of the new dawn that was to lead on to the bright noon of the etcher's art.

Among the pioneers of this revival were Ingres, Delacroix, Paul Huet, and Corot—men who were striving to throw off the traditions of an older school, and were feeling their way to a freer atmosphere. Ingres appears to have etched but one plate, a portrait of *Gabriel Cortois de Pressigny*, Archbishop of Rennes, and French Ambassador at Rome; and the skill with which he has handled the needle, notwithstanding a tendency towards the line manner of work, and the knowledge he possessed of the use of acid, make one regret that he did not devote his talent to etching during the half-century that he lived after making this interesting and most promising experiment, which Beraldi thinks Vandyck himself might not have disavowed. The etching bears the date 1816. Eugène Delacroix's plates were etched during the thirties; and they embrace Bible, portrait, and animal subjects. But while they possess the

LE DÉPART POUR LE TRAVAIL
(From the Etching by Jean François Millet, 1863)

interest of pioneer work, they may not much attract the collector, as they betray a lack of mastery over technical difficulties. Huet was working about the same time as Delacroix, but his plates (landscapes) vary in the skill with which the acid was applied, though the masses of shadow in the foliage and upon trunks of trees are effective, and his best plates have distinct merit. Corot carried the improvements in the manipulation still further, and made his landscapes more poetic. He was able to produce greater effects of atmosphere, and gained, besides, a fuller insight into the capabilities of etching, though his command of its technique lacks a complete fulfilment. Although these craftsmen were unable to produce masterpieces of etching, they broke the ground anew and opened the way to the achievements of the mid-eighteenth century and onwards, which were effected mainly by Méryon, Jacquemart, Millet, Lalanne, Jacque, and Bracquemond.

Charles Méryon began his career as a sailor, but returning to Paris in 1846, he settled down to the life of an artist, was the victim of a chequered career, and ended his days in an asylum. Giving up painting on account of colour-blindness (*daltonisme*), he devoted his genius to etching, under the guidance of Eugène Bléry. After a few plates, in which he translated work of the Dutch painters, he launched out into his own original field, and in the early fifties produced that wonderful series of *Views of Paris* by which he will always be best known. Unlike Hollar, whose work bears the stamp of almost photographic or documentary accuracy, Méryon's etchings show forth Paris as it appeared to his visionary temperament. His work displays a hand of extraordinary skill, and as artistic studies of architecture, combined with

atmospheric and poetic effects, his etchings are unsurpassed. From this series we have already reproduced the finest plate, the *Abside de Notre-Dame de Paris*, as an illustration to the first chapter (see p. 6); and the reader has been able to judge its brilliant qualities. The impression (a first state) from which the reproduction was made is of the greatest rarity, and has upon it six lines of poetry in Méryon's autograph. Such an impression is scarcely likely to come into the possession of a collector, but one in the second state is a prize well worth striving for, and as much as £50 may be asked for it. Mr. Wedmore, in his 'Méryon and Méryon's Paris,' when describing the second state, says: 'Brilliant and rich impressions of this state (*i.e.* with Méryon's name and the date on the left side, and his address on the right) on thinnish wiry paper—old Dutch—represent the plate admirably. The thick paper impressions are inferior.'

Though Jules Jacquemart's work is totally different from that of Méryon, still this Paris draughtsman and engraver, whose principal plates were done some ten years after Méryon's *Paris* series was published, well deserves the praises that have been showered upon him for his renderings, by means of etching-needle and acid, of the various textures of precious stones, chased metals, pearls, crystal, and porcelain. The work is often exquisitely delicate, and drawn with surprising dexterity; and the unerring accuracy with which he has rendered the faceted surfaces of jewels, and the subtle reflections on glass are amazing. Jacquemart was the son of a collector of *objets d'art* in fairly affluent circumstances, and thus was brought up surrounded with art treasures by which to train his eye. Though he died in 1880,

VIEW OF RICHMOND FROM THE THAMES

(*From the Etching by Maxime Lalanne*, 1871)

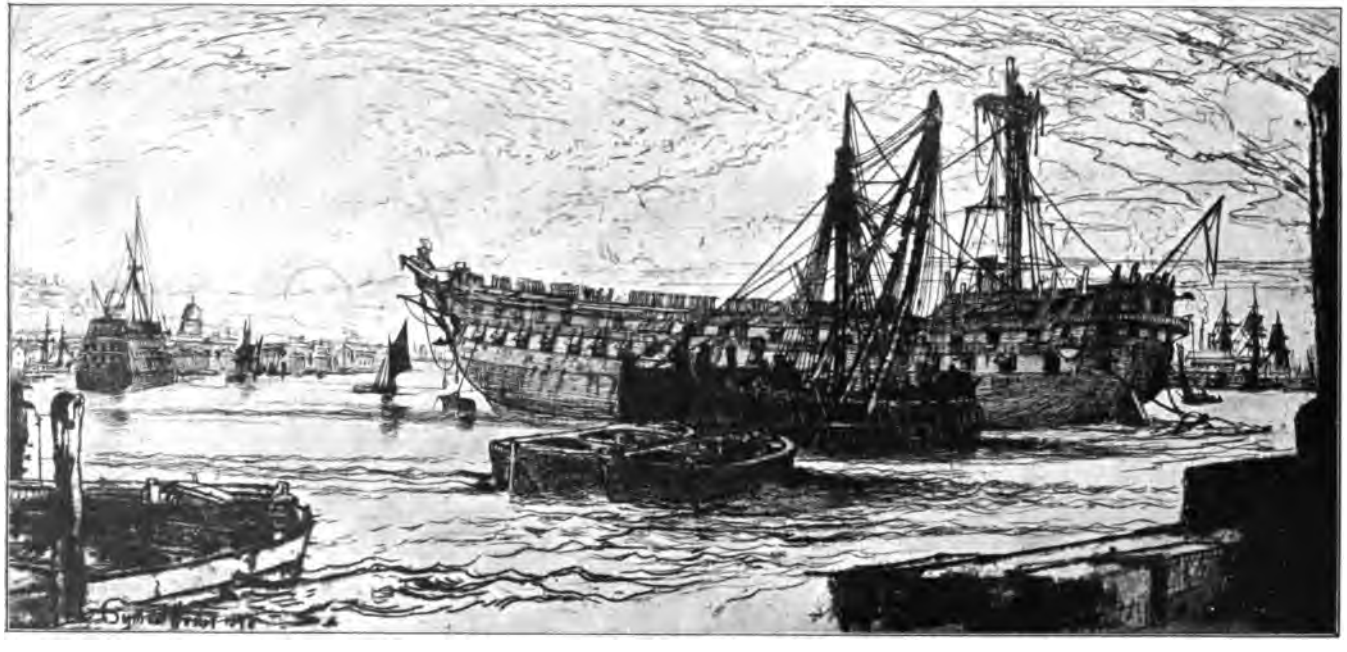
at the early age of forty-three, he managed to etch a large number of plates, from among which the collector will make his selection according to his preference for the objects depicted. The quantity and variety of his work render the choice of an example as an illustration an embarrassing task; but we have decided to reproduce the plate that contains a richly chased watch of the seventeenth century and two views of a sixteenth-century jewel; and the extreme delicacy of drawing, with its firm sureness of line and accurate biting, make it a characteristic specimen.

Felix Bracquemond, the painter-etcher, produced six or seven hundred plates—landscapes, subjects of daily life, and portraits—and his work is characterized by a boldness of design, especially in his bird subjects, though the quality is unequal, and at times it would appear that he has not been successful in the biting. Some of his landscapes have the charm of expressing much in comparatively few lines; and though he has executed a number of etchings after other artists, we prefer him in his own original work, and especially admire his landscapes. His etchings obtained a prominent place at the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition, illustrating the French revival of etching, in 1891.

One of the most brilliant stars of the revival was certainly Jean François Millet, whose painting of *L'Angélus*, it will be remembered, created a great sensation in America a few years ago. His etchings do not much exceed twenty in number, but they exhibit an unmistakable mastery of the art, and display accurate draughtsmanship, richness of effect, and great economy and power of line. *Les Glaneuses*, *La Grande Bergère*, and *La Gardeuse d'Oies* are three notable examples of his etchings, and we have selected a fourth, *Le*

départ pour le travail as an illustration of his work, and have had the reproduction made by the collotype process so that the reader may study the admirable and skilful way in which Millet has produced his gradations, from strong foreground to delicate distance, by means of several bitings. The etching, which was executed in 1863, twelve years before the artist's death, depicts two young peasants going forth to the fields in the clear light of the early morning, the woman wearing a basket on her head through which the rays of the rising sun penetrate, the man carrying a long fork upon his shoulder. Both are shod with sabots. In the distance, on one side, a plough awaits the ploughman who, with his team, approaches from the other. Beyond all are the scattered houses of a village.

Before passing to the revival in this country, we will call attention to one other French painter-etcher, Maxime Lalanne, whose original plates are almost all views in various towns in his native country—Bordeaux, Rouen, Paris, etc.—and in or near London. He produced much sterling work, and though his views are somewhat architectural in treatment, they are by no means deficient in atmospheric effect. He was an accomplished draughtsman and a skilful biter; and some of his smaller subjects perhaps represent him at his best. When looking through a collection of his etchings—first original work, and then translations from the canvases of others—how vividly one feels the charm of the one and realises the deficiences of the other! When, after examining the subjects which were the result of his own vision and the outcome of his own inspiration, we come to those translated by him from others' paintings, we seem, in an instant, to lose the etcher's personality



THE BREAKING UP OF THE 'AGAMEMNON'

(*From the Etching by Sir Seymour Haden*, 1870)

and genius: the artist disappears, and a copyist —a stranger wrestling with a foreign tongue— takes his place. We give a characteristic example of his original work in the *View of Richmond* taken from the towing-path, and etched in 1871. Mr. Hamerton, describing this etching, says: 'Follow the gradations in the foliage about the hill, from the foot to the summit, near the "Star and Garter," and then descending to the left. All that distance is, in its own way, as good as etched work can be. And see how valuable, and how well put in, is that massive clump of trees in the middle distance to the left. Nothing can be better of its kind than that clump and its reflection.' Lalanne died in the year 1886, at the age of sixty.

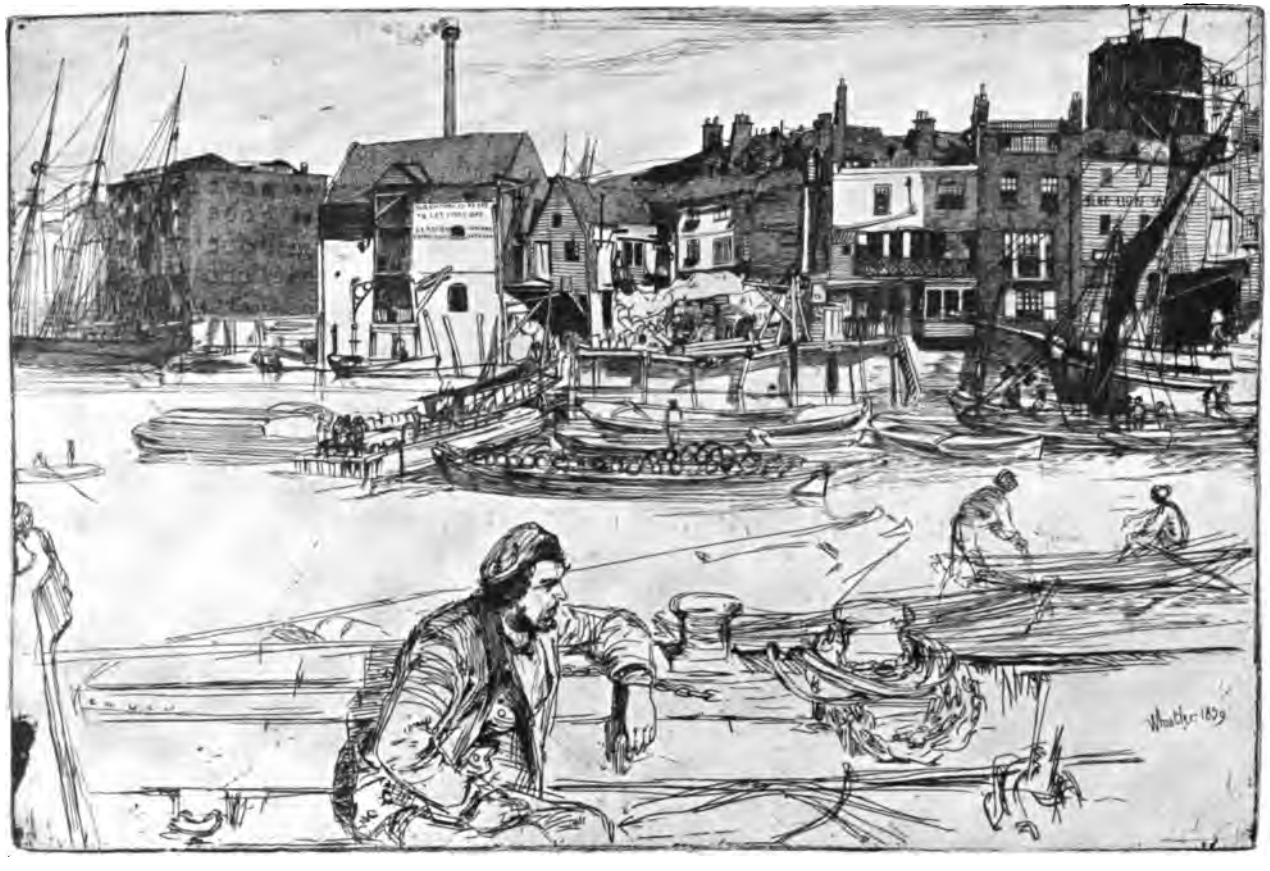
Although there are other modern French etchers of note who could be named, those already mentioned are the ones to whom are chiefly due the revival, maintenance, and development of etching in France, and the collector will therefore do well to acquire some representative specimens by each of these masters, and on the average they may not cost him very much.

One of the first of the revivalists in England was John Crome, the chief of the Norwich school of artists, his earliest plate being dated 1809. And Crome was followed by Sir David Wilkie and Andrew Geddes. The credit, however, for the great revival of etching in this country is due to Sir Seymour Haden and Mr. J. McNeill Whistler, both of whom, happily, are still living to see the fruits of their labours.

Even before Méryon's series of *Paris* plates was produced, Sir Seymour Haden had tried his skill at etching; and during a long space of years, by voice, pen, and needle he has been exerting

his powers to revive, popularise, and firmly establish the art of the etcher upon British soil. He has now retired from the field of active labour, but altogether his etched plates number nearly two hundred, and comprise scenes on land and river. Many of the subjects were drawn upon the copper plates in the open air, so that they have the charm of work direct from nature, and in treatment they are broad and vigorous. At the time the catalogue of Sir Seymour's etchings was prepared (about twenty years ago), some sets of permanent miniature photographs were made from the prints to illustrate a few copies of the book, and they display, at a glance, the genius of the artist. We are fortunate in being able to illustrate Sir Seymour Haden's work by a reproduction from one of his most popular plates, *The Breaking up of the Agamemnon*, etched in the year 1870, when, though still in practice as a surgeon, he was at the height of his artistic power. It is a sunset view of the Thames at Greenwich, and the plate is quite typical of Sir Seymour's style.

The second artist whose efforts have helped towards the revival of etching in England is, as we have said, Mr. J. A. McNeill Whistler, and his labours in this country began during the fifties. The dominant feature of his work, as everyone knows, is originality, and his themes are those that take his fancy, expressed in a style entirely his own. His accomplished skill all will acknowledge, but varying opinions have been expressed as to his methods, with the result that on more than one occasion he has thought it necessary to cross swords with his critics. His work with the etching needle has been more or less intermittent, and recently he has partly relinquished the etcher's art in favour of that of the lithographer.



BLACK LION WHARF, WAPPING

(*From the Etching by Mr. J. McNeill Whistler*, 1859)

His etchings include four sets—namely, the French Series, the Thames Series, the Venice Series, and the set of Twenty-six Etchings; but as he is, perhaps, best known to the popular mind by his Thames Series, we reproduce from this set *Black Lion Wharf, Wapping*, a most admirable piece of work, which well illustrates his early style. It was produced in the year 1859.

During these more recent years a numerous school of etchers has sprung up, and much exceedingly fine work is produced which demands the attention of the present-day collector. This modern school has been greatly helped and influenced by the work and teaching of Professor Alphonse Legros, who, though born at Dijon, has done most of his etched work in this country; and who has produced a large number of plates—male portraits, figure subjects, and landscapes—which steadily increase in value. Professor Legros' position as one of the chief of modern etchers has not yet been fully recognised; but the importance of his work will be realised more and more as time goes by.

CHAPTER III

LINE ENGRAVING

LINE engraving may be divided into two main classes—original and interpretative; the one in which the product is the spontaneous conception of the engraver's own mind, and the other in which the results are translations, in black and white, of the compositions of painters and sculptors. To the first class belongs almost all the output of the early practitioners of line engraving; but from the days of the famous Marcantonio Raimondi, the art gradually ceased to be one of original effort, and became more and more the means of rendering in print the work of painters.

The way in which the line engraver proceeds is as follows:—Upon the sheet of copper he first traces the outline of the subject he proposes to engrave, and then, taking a triangular-pointed tool (called a graver) with the handle placed in the palm of his hand, he pushes the instrument, guided by his thumb and forefinger, along and into the metal, and so ploughs furrows of greater or less width and depth, according as he wishes the lines of his subject to appear coarse or fine in the printed impression. By this method of working it will be understood that the lines must lack much of the freedom of those made with the etching needle, and that they must resolve themselves more into systems of strokes parallel to or

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

(From the Line Engraving by Andrea Mantegna, late fifteenth century)

crossing each other. The result has been that, in course of time, traditions and rules of procedure have been accepted by interpretative engravers, and the different textures—flesh, foliage, foreground, etc.—have been rendered, more or less, according to mechanical formulæ. It was this working upon set rules that caused Sir Seymour Haden to define line engraving as a manufacture and not as an art, in his lecture on 'The Relative Claims of Etching and Engraving to rank as Fine Arts,' delivered before the Society of Arts in May 1883.

What has been said as to the line engraver's method is well illustrated in the enlargement we give (to twice the scale of the original engraving) of the head from the portrait of Charles I. by Sir Robert Strange (see p. 50). The effects, it will be observed, are procured by the formal rules alluded to, and the flesh is translated by rows of dashes, and rows of smaller and finer dashes and dots, placed alternately. If the reader will single out a line, say, in the pointed beard, and examine it carefully with the aid of a glass, he will find that it varies in thickness along its course, according as the engraver varied the pressure he put upon his tool in making the furrow in the metal plate. When this quality is appreciated the reader will recognise an important characteristic of line engraving in contrast with etching, where, as we have already explained, there can be no gradation in the lines. There is very little work, excepting the earliest, that has been produced solely with the graver, for it has been the rule (even from Dürer's time) to begin with a foundation of etching, and this preliminary etching became more and more elaborate, until in the early nineteenth century quite three-fourths of the lines were first bitten

into the plate, and afterwards re-entered over and over again with the graver until brought to the engraver's satisfaction.

Until about 1820 the metal used in line engraving was almost always copper, though silver, iron, brass, and zinc were occasionally employed, but from that date copper was gradually superseded by steel, in order that the harder metal might yield a greater number of impressions. The question is sometimes asked, when a print is being examined—Was the subject engraved on copper or steel? From the actual quality of the engraved line, as seen in the print, it is impossible to say, and an answer can only be arrived at by the general circumstances. As steel was not employed until 1820, it is of course safe to say that engravings were on copper before that date; but after that time there must be doubt, unless from knowledge outside the print itself it can be ascertained upon which metal the engraver worked. John Saddler, the eminent engraver who died a few years ago, when asked the question by a friend of the writer, said he could not tell from the quality of the printed line upon which metal it had been engraved; and, where a past-master of engraving cannot decide, the amateur will have very little hope of success.

The date of the invention of engraving, for the purpose of taking impressions on vellum or paper, has not been, and possibly may not ever be, finally settled; but the art is known to have been practised with some skill during the first quarter of the fifteenth century, and to have been a development of the goldsmith's craft.

It is not certain either whether line engraving was first practised in Germany or in Italy, though the difference in time could only have been a

THE DEATH OF THE VIRGIN

(*From the Line Engraving by Martin Schongauer*)

few years at most, and the art came increasingly into use in both countries soon after the middle of the fifteenth century.

Of all the branches of print-collecting, those of the early Italian and German schools are the most difficult. The engravings are continually engaging the attention of the most learned experts, and the difficulty of assigning the prints to their proper engravers is one of the most troublesome features. With early Italian work there is less technical skill in the use of the tools, and less perfection in the printing, than with early German engraving, but more grace and simplicity of treatment. Early Italian prints always command high prices, partly from their intrinsic merit, and partly because they form important links in the history of chalcography, and it is no unusual thing for a specimen to fetch £300 or £400. We give a reproduction of *The Descent from the Cross*, a bold and masterly piece of work by the hand of the greatest primitive Italian engraver, and painter, Andrea Mantegna, produced towards the end of the fifteenth century. It will be noticed that the shading lines are mostly in one slanting direction, with very little cross-hatchwork, a characteristic of this master's engravings. We, in England, chiefly know Mantegna by his famous paintings of *The Triumphs of Julius Cæsar* at Hampton Court.

The engraved work of the early Italians culminated in the plates by Marcantonio Raimondi, whose birth at Bologna has been placed by some as early as the year 1470. Marcantonio's style of work is a combination of the graceful Italian method of engraving he learnt at Bologna, during his early years, under Francia, with the more precise and firmer treatment employed by

Dürer, many of whose prints he copied from about the year 1508. Whether these copies were made fraudulently or not has been much discussed. In the combination of these two styles the influence of the Italian method prevailed. Upon his arrival at Rome in about 1510, he obtained an introduction to Raphael; and under the guidance of this great painter, his skill rapidly developed. It was upon the sketches of Raphael that Marcantonio was chiefly engaged, working them up into finished engravings, and adding backgrounds and other details. Bartsch catalogues no less than 650 plates by the hand of Marcantonio, of which as many as sixty-eight are copies from the prints of Dürer. Among the most highly-prized are *Lucretia*, *Adam and Eve*, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, *The Climbers*, *The Virgin suckling the Child*, and *The Holy Family under a Palm Tree*. A reproduction of Marcantonio's portrait of *Pietro Aretino* will be found at page 108.

Passing to Germany, where the art of engraving may, perhaps, have been practised first, we find Martin Schongauer, who was born at Colmar in Alsace about the year 1450, and who, by his genius, combined with the plodding industry and accuracy in detail characteristic of his race, was exerting a widespread influence as the fifteenth century neared its close. His work—executed before 1491, in which year he died—has all the attractiveness of German art, and the engravings are much sought after at the present day. He, to a large extent, freed himself from the dry hard method of the goldsmith, and gave to his engravings a sense of tenderness; and, above all, showed the way to Dürer. It has been pointed out that 'Michelangelo was not too great to copy

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH THE MONKEY
(From the Line Engraving by Albrecht Dürer, about 1500)

a print by Schongauer, nor Raphael to adopt from one of Schongauer's engravings the principal motive of one of his most famous pictures.' We give a reproduction of his finest print, *The Death of the Virgin*, which at the Frederic Kalle sale, in 1875, realised no less than £420.

Following immediately after Schongauer, was, as we have said, Albrecht Dürer (born 1471, died 1528), one of a family of eighteen children, and the son of a goldsmith. Dürer has been justly described as 'the greatest artist who ever practised engraving'; though had his own inclinations prevailed, he would have been known to posterity by his work with the brush rather than by that with the graver. After serving an apprenticeship to Michel Wolgemut, the painter and draughtsman of Nuremberg, young Dürer, following the custom of his day, started in 1489 on his travels. At Colmar he came under the influence of the Schongauer school of engraving (although he did not see that great pioneer of the craft himself), and, probably at Venice, he became closely associated with the Italian painter-engraver Jacopo de' Barbari. Under these two influences Dürer's genius matured, and he assimilated and combined the finer qualities of both, and then imbued the result with his own wonderful individuality. Dürer's prints gained an almost immediate success, as is shown by the numerous copies and piracies which were so soon made — by the Wierix's, Marcantonio Raimondi, Israhel van Meckenem, and others,—and the charm they exerted over his contemporaries has gone on increasing until at the present day fine impressions are more keenly sought for than ever, and even from the mere mercenary commercial standpoint, choice Dürer engravings are a sound financial investment.

Dürer returned to Nuremberg after his wanderings, and at the age of twenty-three married Agnes Frey, and, most fortunately for after generations, settled down to engraving to earn a living. His earliest dated plate is *Four Naked Women* (Bartsch 75), which, besides the monogram at foot, is inscribed on a globe at the top of the subject '1497 O. G. H.'; but it is by no means believed to be his first engraving. It exhibits some of the severer qualities of his Schongauer training, but this harder technique before long gave place to a more picturesque treatment, partly due to the influence of a visit made to Nuremberg by Barbari. With each succeeding plate Dürer's skill and power increased until he reached his zenith in about the year 1515, by which time most of his finest works with the graver had been done, such as *Adam and Eve* (see p. 110), *The Great Fortune*, *The Knight and Death*, *Melancholia*, and *St. Eustace.* From the unfinished proof of the *Adam and Eve* in the British Museum, we get a glimpse of Dürer's method of work; for in it we find the background has been elaborately finished before the two figures have been commenced. This engraving shows the result of Dürer's long and careful study of the human form; and by the number of studies that exist of the figures, we can imagine the amount of care the engraver bestowed upon the subject.

An important feature in Dürer's work is the careful attention he paid to the backgrounds; and in the *Great Fortune*, the elaborate and beautifully rendered bird's-eye view of a town, which occupies the lower part of the engraving, is as much the cause of the great popularity of the print as the figure of the goddess itself. In the collotype we give of *The Virgin and Child with the Monkey* produced during the early part of Dürer's engraving

HEROD'S FEAST

(From the Line Engraving by Scheltius à Bolswert after Rubens, about 1640)

life, a print which probably gives the most dignified of all his renderings of the Virgin and Child, we see in the exquisite landscape background a view on the river Pegnitz near Nuremberg. Dürer's coloured drawing for this landscape is preserved in the British Museum; and it depicts upon an island in the river, the plaster and timber-built house with a steep gable, as seen in the print. Houses of this kind were built for defensive purposes on islands in the neighbourhood of towns, and the one here shown was standing until within recent years, and was used as a powder magazine. This print of the *Virgin with the Monkey* was copied by Wenzel von Olmütz.

In 1520 Dürer visited the Netherlands; and at Antwerp he met his great rival in the engraving world, Lucas van Leyden. Upon his return to his native Nuremberg, Dürer's physical vigour seemed to fail him and his waning health affected his work, which during his later years was chiefly directed to portraiture, and plates of minor importance; and at Nuremberg he died in 1528, having given to the world its finest examples of work with the graver. It is interesting to note that Dürer was the first to introduce etching into the preliminary work of his engravings. We have already given a reproduction of the charming print *The Nativity* (see p. 10), and at page 110 will be found one of the *Adam and Eve.* In concluding our notes on Dürer, we cannot do better than quote the advice offered by Mr. Cust in his monograph* on this great artist: 'The minds of those who study Dürer's work should be open and unbiassed. In that case there cannot but be conveyed to them the lesson which truth, purity, and sincerity of purpose are ever bound to teach.'

* 'The Engravings of Albrecht Dürer,' by Lionel Cust. 1894.

A little later than the life-work of Albrecht Dürer came that of the one great Dutch engraver of this early period, Lucas van Leyden (born 1494, died 1533), whose technical skill was only slightly inferior to that of the great German artist himself. He commenced to engrave at a very early age, and at fourteen produced *The Monk Sergius killed by Mahomet* (Bartsch 126), which is signed with the initial L. and dated 1508. A gifted critic considers that Lucas van Leyden 'lacked Dürer's precision in drawing and was totally deficient in Dürer's sentiment and imagination. He had, however, a breadth of design and a mastery of aërial perspective which is often lacking in Dürer's work.' Unfortunately Lucas van Leyden engraved his plates with a light touch; so that in consequence really fine rich impressions were few in number originally and are now very scarce indeed.

The prints by Dürer and Marcantonio exerted a powerful influence upon engraving, north and south of the Alps, during almost the whole of the sixteenth century; but the Italian exponents of the art—among them Veneziano, Bonasone, Beatrizet, and the Ghisis—were unable to maintain the very high standard of quality set them by Marcantonio. In northern Europe, during the century which elapsed between the deaths of the two first named masters and the birth of the school of engraving formed under Rubens at Antwerp, came the group of seven German engravers, known as the 'Little Masters,' on account of the minute scale on which their engravings were done. These seven craftsmen were Altdorfer, Aldegrever, Hans and Barthel Beham, Pencz, Binck, and Brosamer; and they carried on the traditions of Dürer, the two Behams and Georg Pencz being Dürer's own pupils. The leading characteristic of the work of the Little

GUILLAUME DE BRISACIER

(*From the Line Engraving by Antoine Masson after Mignard*, 1664)

Masters is to be found in the endeavour to combine the principal features of the schools of Italy and Germany, the grace of the one with the exactitude of the other. Aldegrever is generally considered the chief of the group, the prints, however, by all these engravers will well repay the study of the collector. The demand the prints by these masters will be likely to make upon the collector's purse is indicated in the chapter on the money value of prints.

During the first half of the seventeenth century a very important change came over the practice of the craft in the Low Countries. The flowing grace of Italian art had to some extent penetrated north, but the temperament of the northern painters had been unable to shake itself free from the precise and severe methods so long in vogue, until Rubens and Vandyck stepped upon the scene. These two great painters threw in their lot with the Italian Renaissance, and made themselves masters of Italian freedom. To interpret his paintings Rubens could find no engraver capable of adequately and sympathetically rendering in black and white the freedom and flow of his pictures; so he set to work to found a school and to train a group of men in order that they might be able to satisfy his mind and desire. The result of Rubens's active influence in the cause of engraving was almost a revolution in the practice of the craft from a hard, severe, and precise style, to a method energetic, graceful, and varied. The chief engravers who were taught under the direction and supervision of Rubens were Scheltius à Bolswert, Paulus Pontius, the two Pieter de Jodes (father and son), and the two Lucas Vorstermans (father and son). In illustration of the work of the Rubens school we give a reproduction of *Herod's Feast*, by Scheltius à Bolswert after Rubens's picture. In the engravings by these

artists of the Low Countries it is noticeable that etching, in the early work upon the plates, came increasingly into use, particularly so in the plates by Jonas Suyderhoef, where the work of the needle largely predominates.

Line engraving did not take root in France quite so soon as in other countries, in consequence of the popularity of the etchings by Callot and Bosse; but when it once began to be practised, and under the patronage of Louis XIV. (who also extended his favour to Stefano della Bella, the etcher), the art made immense strides, and a school of brilliant engravers was formed whose work for delicacy of touch and thorough command of technique is unsurpassed. One of the earliest French line engravers was Jean Duvet, who was working from about 1520 to 1550; and another was Etienne Delaune, who is best known as an ornamentist, and has been mentioned as influenced by the work of the Little Masters. The first great engraver, however, to bring the genius of individuality to French engraving was Claude Mellan, who had been influenced by the work of Rome and Antwerp. His own personal method of engraving consisted in dispensing almost entirely with cross-hatching, and in obtaining the gradations of shadows, the modelling of features, and the flow of drapery by simply varying the strength of the lines.

The great triumphs of the French school of line engraving were achieved in the latter half of the seventeenth and early years of the eighteenth centuries by the Drevets (father and son), Robert Nanteuil, Antoine Masson, and Gérard Edelinck, the prints by all of whom are highly prized by collectors. It has been ably said of these men that 'in interpreting the portraits

PORTRAIT OF BISHOP BOSSUET

(From the Line Engraving by Pierre Imbert Drevet after H. Rigaud, 1723)

PRINCE RUPERT

(*From the Line Engraving by William Faithorne after Vandyck*)

and heroic compositions of the painters of that age and court, they exercised all those technical acquirements which had been attained in the earlier part of the century [the seventeenth] by the school of Antwerp under the eye of Rubens, and carried them on to greater and more careful perfection with technical methods still more varied and expressive.' In the first chapter we gave a reproduction of Gérard Edelinck's best work in the portrait of *John Dryden* (see p. 8), a print full of charm and vigour; and here we show an example of Antoine Masson's power in the portrait of *Guillaume de Brisacier*, engraved in 1664, and typically displaying the refined delicacy of the school. We also give a reproduction of that masterpiece of engraving, the magnificent portrait of *Bishop Bossuet* by Pierre Imbert Drevet, after the painting by Hyacinthe Rigaud, and executed in the year 1723.

The eighteenth-century school of French engravers was a numerous one, but the work evinced a tendency towards prettiness at the expense of more masculine qualities. Among the members of this school were C. N. Cochin the elder, Jacques Le Bas, Louis Surugue, Nicolas Tardieu, Laurent Cars, Nicolas de Larmessin, Jean Massard, Nicolas de Launay, J. Daullé, P. A. Martini, A. de St. Aubin and A. J. Duclos.

Line engraving did not obtain foothold in England until the latter half of the sixteenth century; and then it was chiefly employed upon maps, portraits, and title-pages. The portraits were mainly used as book illustrations, but occasionally an important one was issued separately. From the time of its commencement here until the end of the seventeenth century, the art was greatly strengthened by the immigration of crafts-

men from Germany and the Low Countries, who brought with them the traditions of the craft as practised in those countries. Humphray Cole, who was employed at the Mint, Augustine Ryther, who is known by his engravings of the series of maps illustrating the attempted invasion by the Spanish Armada, issued about 1590, and Remigius Hogenberg, are the three earliest known engravers in England; and about the same time Theodor De Bry came over from Liège and helped to bring the art into popular vogue. One of De Bry's chief works was the series of plates of *The Grand Funeral Procession and Obsequies of Sir Philip Sydney*, engraved in 1587. By the influence of De Bry, William Rogers (who was working at the end of Elizabeth's reign) attained great skill; and he is believed to be one of the first Englishmen to engrave figures, his full-length portrait of *Queen Elizabeth* being a particularly vigorous print.

A short time after De Bry landed on our shores, R. Elstracke arrived from the Low Countries and he spent many years in England, engraving a large number of portraits and title-pages, the best of which are keenly coveted by collectors. Though stiff in treatment, they possess 'a striking quality of energy.' His portraits include some of the most important personages of his time, and his principal series was the set of English monarchs, published in 1618 under the title 'Basiliωlogia; a Booke of Kings.' Some of the older authorities believed that Elstracke was English born.

The next great stimulus to engraving in this country came from Holland with the De Passes. The head of the family was Crispin van de Passe, who had worked at Cologne, Utrecht, Amsterdam, and Paris; and with his varied experience he,

CHARLES I.

(*From the Line Engraving by Sir Robert Strange after Vandyck*, 1770)

SPECIMEN OF LINE ENGRAVING, FROM THE PORTRAIT OF CHARLES I.

(*Enlarged to twice the scale of the original Engraving*)

with his son Simon, founded a school here and gave line-engraving a fresh impetus, exerting a powerful influence upon the craftsmen who practised here from the days of James I. to the time of the Great Rebellion. These engravers were: William Hole, Francis Delaram, John Payne, Thomas Cecill, William Marshall, George Glover, and Robert Vaughan. The finest prints by these men are, as a rule, very scarce, and they are much sought after at the present time. The subjects are usually portraits, hence they possess the double interest of historical documents and specimens of early English line engraving. In treatment they are sometimes hard and 'dry'; but as time passed by, the traditions and methods of the freer school of Antwerp found their way over to this country and greatly helped to enrich the technical quality of the English style. The art in England, as developed under these continental influences, found its most accomplished exponent in William Faithorne (born 1616, died 1691), who, first a pupil of John Payne, greatly improved his technical skill under the brilliant engraver Robert Nanteuil, at Paris. Faithorne is celebrated for his portraits of the leading characters of the Commonwealth and Restoration Periods; and from this famous series we reproduce the richly-engraved portrait of *Prince Rupert*, from the painting by Vandyck.

By the eighteenth century a definite school of English engraving was formed, and among its principal members we must place that thoroughly English artist, William Hogarth, who engraved a number of plates from his own compositions, including the set of *The Rake's Progress*, and as we have seen by a reproduction in the first chapter (see p. 10), his *Southwark Fair*. But the subjects upon which he set most store he handed

over to the more accomplished French engravers, Scotin, Baron, and Ravenet. Possibly the most important British engraver was the Scotsman Sir Robert Strange, who favoured the Jacobite rising of 1745, and was engraver 'by appointment' to the Young Pretender. He engraved a large number of portraits, and classical subjects after the Italian masters, refinement being the keynote of his work. We reproduce the full-length portrait of *Charles I.*, engraved after Vandyck in 1770, which demonstrates the high-water mark of Strange's skill, and the reader will be able to study the style of his work. It is from the face portion of this subject that we have made the enlargement to illustrate the technical qualities of line engraving.

Working at the same time as Strange was William Woollett, who, though born at Maidstone, spent his life in London, and was enabled to study art by means of money his father had won in a lottery. Appointed engraver to George III., he made landscape his chief aim, and translated many of Richard Wilson's pastoral paintings; but he by no means neglected other subjects, as his well-known plates of *The Death of General Wolfe* and *The Battle at La Hogue*, both after West, amply testify.

Woollett was followed by William Sharp, the third most notable engraver working towards the end of the eighteenth century, whose prints fully justify a place in the portfolio of the collector, though just now the caprice of fashion does not smile in their direction. Sharp's engravings—mostly Bible subjects and portraits of celebrities—were executed in a vigorous style, and his portrait of *Dr. John Hunter*, after Reynolds, is an excellent example of his work.

As Rubens in the seventeenth century had trained a group of engravers to translate his

CLOVELLY BAY

(*From the Line Engraving by William Miller after J. M. W. Turner*, 1824)

paintings into black and white, and render as nearly as possible the freedom of touch of his own brush, so in the early part of the nineteenth, Turner gathered round him a number of craftsmen, and carefully superintended them as they engraved his landscapes, criticising their work, and 'touching' impressions to show the effects he needed, and how they were to be obtained. Among these engravers were George and W. B. Cooke, William Miller, J. T. Willmore, and Robert Brandard; and from among their prints we select for illustration *Clovelly Bay*, from the 'Southern Coast' series, engraved by William Miller in 1824. It is an admirable specimen of Turneresque landscape engraving. Other English engravers—J. H. Robinson, Robert Graves, and Raimbach among the number—flourished in this country during the nineteenth century, but in proportion as the revival of etching has advanced, so line engraving has declined, until at the present day scarcely a member of the fraternity survives.

CHAPTER IV

MEZZOTINT ENGRAVING

THE style of engraving to be considered in the present chapter is perhaps the most popular of all; and although mezzotint is, in the main, interpretative work, and therefore of necessity lacks the spontaneous inspiration of etching, still as it translates so perfectly the paintings of the school of Reynolds and Romney, and seems to reproduce even the touches of the painter's brush, it possesses a real charm and exerts a powerful influence over lovers of art.

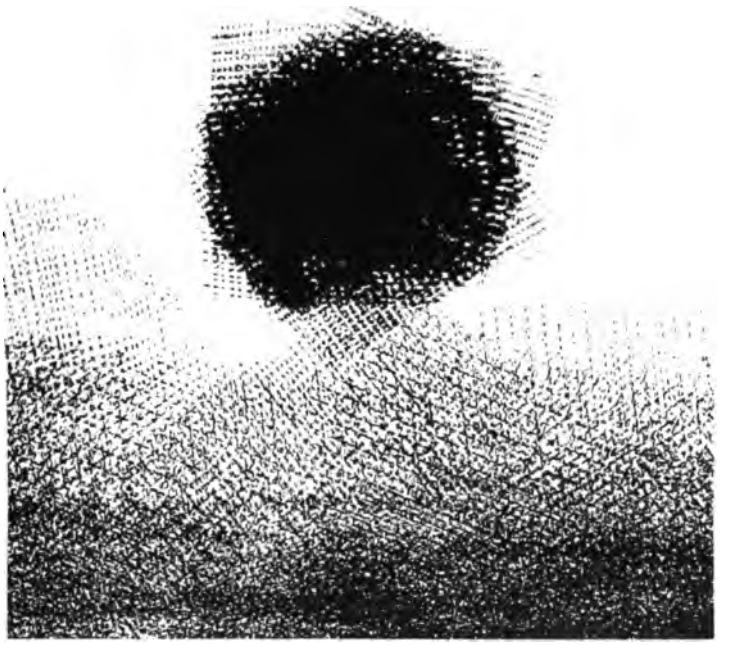
The circumstances of the invention of mezzotint, and of the production of its first example, are well authenticated and may be briefly narrated. Ludwig von Siegen, a soldier in the service of William VI., Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, was an enthusiastic art amateur well acquainted with all the systems of engraving; and, working out an entirely new method of his own, and keeping the secret of his invention strictly to himself, he at last was able to announce his discovery by sending a few impressions of his first finished plate to the young Landgrave. This was a plate that doubtlessly highly delighted the young Prince, for it was none other than a portrait of his mother, *The Landgravine Amelia Elizabeth.* With the impressions Von Siegen sent a letter vaguely explaining his process. This was in the year 1642,

Preliminary Etching

Finished Engraving

ABEL ROPER

(From the Mezzotint by George White, after H. Hysing, about 1720)



SPECIMEN OF MEZZOTINT GROUND

(*Enlarged to three times the scale of the original*)

and for a dozen years Von Siegen preserved the technical secrets of his invention, as it was not until 1654 that Prince Rupert, also a lover of art as well as a soldier, who had been roaming from one continental town to another, found himself at Brussels, to which city circumstances had led the inventor of mezzotint engraving; and here the two soldier-artists met, and a friendship arose, with the result that Von Siegen disclosed his secret to the Prince and instructed him in the details of the recently discovered process. Rupert set to work with the eagerness of an enthusiast, and four years later produced the early masterpiece of the art, *The Executioner of John the Baptist*, a plate of marvellous power and of great size.

The restoration of monarchy in England brought Rupert back to this country, and with him came the art of mezzotint engraving.

Now a few words as to the production of a mezzotint. The engraver starts with a sheet of copper that has been well polished, and after first marking parallel lines across it with chalk, about three-quarters of an inch apart, he takes a curved edged tool, in shape resembling a chisel, with one side grooved and so made that the sharpened edge forms a series of dots, and placing this tool between the first two chalk lines, he rocks it to and fro, and very slightly moves it away from him at each stroke until he works the instrument right across the plate and completes a series of zig-zag dotted indentations in the metal. He performs the same operation in the next chalked division, and then again and again until he has covered the whole plate. The entire operation is then repeated the other way of the plate, then diagonally, and so on over

and over again at different angles until the plate has been roughened evenly all over. The tool that performs this work is called a cradle, or rocker, and the process is termed 'laying the ground.' That the reader may quite understand the process, we have reproduced (see p. 54) a small piece from a partly 'grounded' plate enlarged to three times the scale of the original work. If the plate were printed from as soon as the 'grounding' process has been finished, the impression would be perfectly black; but now the task of scraping (another term for engraving in mezzotint) begins. After the outline of the design to be engraved has been transferred to the roughened metal, the engraver takes a tool, in form something like a lancet, and scraping away more or less of the roughness, as the parts of his subject require to be light or dark, he gradually develops his picture, and in the end produces the finished mezzotint engraving which when printed is so familiar.

This style of engraving is suited to several classes of subject, but it is pre-eminently the method for portraiture. The first plate of all was, as we have said, a portrait, and, in like manner, the first dated plate engraved in England was a portrait—*Charles II.*, by William Sherwin, produced in 1669. The art once planted in this country soon established itself here, attracted a number of artists—including possibly Sir Christopher Wren—and made itself so thoroughly English as to be termed by our French neighbours *la manière anglaise.* A great proportion of the work of the painters of the Lely and Kneller period (the period of the establishment of the new art) was engraved in mezzotint, and it is surprising how quickly the technicalities of the method were learnt and the

MRS. BONFOY

(From the Mezzotint by James MacArdell after Sir J. Reynolds, 1755)

GARRICK BETWEEN TRAGEDY AND COMEDY

(*From the Mezzotint by Edward Fisher after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1762)

difficulties overcome. Isaac Beckett, one of the earliest English practitioners, produced most excellent results, while John Smith and John Simon, who were employed in Kneller's house to engrave his portraits, between them scraped something like 175 plates from their master's canvases. Many of these plates render the painter's touch with wonderful fidelity, and are highly esteemed by present-day amateurs.

A reason why mezzotint engraving exercises a legitimate sway over collectors is that although the work is interpretative, yet each interpreter seems to have employed a different language, or, in other words, the work of almost each engraver has its own individual qualities. And as each man thus worked more or less on lines of his own, it is easy to understand that a number of them introduced improvements of manipulation that added to the attractiveness of the art. To begin with, Von Siegen produced his first plate by working from the lights to the shadows; but no sooner was Prince Rupert initiated into the mysteries of the process than he (as seen by the plate of *The Executioner of John the Baptist*) began his work by laying a uniform ground (in principle somewhat in the way we have described), and then scraped from a solid black to the lights—the method since universally practised. Abraham Blooteling, another early engraver, who came to this country from Holland, made further improvements in the laying of the ground; and then George White, who was engraving a little later than John Smith and Simon, introduced the system of first outlining the subjects in etching, and then laying the ground over the etched work, a practice that has been usually adopted ever since his day, Richard Earlom being accustomed to make most elaborate preliminary

etchings. And so almost each engraver seems to occupy a separate niche in the history of the art. We give a collotype illustration of George White's mezzotint portrait of *Abel Roper*, after Hysing, produced in about the year 1720. By its side we have placed an early impression from the plate showing only the preliminary etching, and before any mezzotint work had been added. This preliminary etching is of great interest, for, so far as the writer knows, it is the earliest example of the kind that exists.

During the reign of Anne, and still more so during that of her successor, painting in England declined to a very low ebb, and consequently mezzotinting suffered great depression. So much was this the case that towards the middle of the eighteenth century the art almost died out. However, the darkest hour preceded a glorious dawn; and thanks chiefly to three men in Dublin—Beard, Brooks, and Miller—mezzotinting was kept alive, and coming back to London, advanced so rapidly under the skilful hands of Brooks's pupils, that from about 1755 to 1810, plates were produced of the greatest beauty, that gained and still possess immense popularity. Of course, mezzotint engraving owed much to the revival of painting, under Reynolds, Romney, and their contemporaries, for the works of these painters were exactly of the kind to bring forth the best qualities of the scraper's art; but it is also true that the painting of the period was indebted to the lesser art of the mezzotinter. As a result the two arts advanced side by side, each giving the other help, the painters and engravers working in close alliance.

The first of the revivalists was James MacArdell, who led the way to the greatest achievements of the art by his engravings from pictures by Vandyck,

LADY SARAH BUNBURY

(From the Mezzotint by Edward Fisher after Sir J. Reynolds, 1766)

CATHERINE, LADY BAMPFYLDE

(*From the Mezzotint by Thomas Watson after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1779)

Rubens, and others of the earlier school, as well as from those by his contemporaries, Reynolds, Hudson, and Ramsay. Though almost all MacArdell's work was done in London, he learnt mezzotinting under Brooks at Dublin, and among his fellow-pupils were Houston, Spooner, and Purcell. From among MacArdell's prints we have chosen for reproduction the portrait of *Mrs. Bonfoy*, engraved in 1755, and it well shows the capabilities of mezzotint. The plate became very popular, and was copied by several engravers.

From the time of MacArdell's success the number of mezzotinters rapidly increased, and many of the most delightful plates so popular and expensive at the present day were produced at this period. In the year 1762, Edward Fisher, the engraver of many well-known prints, produced the charming *Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy*, which we reproduce; four years later he published the portrait of *Lady Sarah Bunbury*, and five years later still he engraved that exquisite rendering of human affection, *Hope nursing Love*. The portrait of Lady Sarah Bunbury ranks among the masterpieces of the art, and well deserves the popularity it has achieved. Lady Sarah, it may be remembered, was one of the bridesmaids to Queen Charlotte.

Working at the same time was James Watson, of whose nearly 200 plates some sixty were from paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds. His best work was produced between the years 1765 and 1780. What a number of his engravings might be named that would recall brilliant plates to the mind of the collector, such as *Mrs. Abington as the Comic Muse*, *Lord Rodney*, *Dr. Johnson*, and *Frances, Lady Bridges*. We may mention that it was James Watson who was employed to engrave

those subjects after Reynolds, in which mothers are represented with their children.

As the century neared its close, quite an army of engravers crowded upon the scene. There was John Finlayson, the engraver of the portrait of *The Duchess of Hamilton and Argyll*—one of the famous Miss Gunnings—who was mother of four dukes. There was William Pether, who made so great a feature of candle-light effects, and was so happy in his renderings of that class of subject from Joseph Wright's pictures. And there was Valentine Green, who during a period of some forty years engraved about 400 subjects, and working with great delicacy of touch, scraped some of the finest plates, the series of full-length standing portraits of ladies being among the most prized. At the time of writing, an impression of his *Mary Isabella, Duchess of Rutland*, after Reynolds, holds the record price, for a Valentine Green, of £1050 (see p. 118). With the name of Jonathan Spilsbury we remember the superb portrait of *Miss Jacobs*, which won a premium at the Society of Arts at the time it was engraved; and of the work of John Jones we have already seen a specimen in the portrait of *Lady Caroline Price*, reproduced in the first chapter (see p. 14). The original painting by Reynolds, from which this engraving was made, was sold a few years ago for £3885. It is worth remarking that though Jones produced nearly fifty plates after Reynolds and Romney, he engraved the portraits of only three ladies after each painter.

Richard Earlom, when a boy, made copies of Cipriani's panels on the Lord Mayor's state-coach, which were so successful that he became a pupil of that master, and so began his artistic career. He has earned a brilliant reputation by his un-

DIANA, VISCOUNTESS CROSBIE

(*From the Mezzotint by W. Dickinson after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1779)

rivalled *Flower and Fruit Pieces*, after the Dutch painter Jan van Huysum. But his work had a wide range, and besides still-life subjects, included portraits, Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode*, Interiors after Joseph Wright of Derby, Claude's *Liber Veritatis*, and Indian outdoor and indoor scenes. Earlom was seventy-nine when he died in 1822. Thomas Watson, who was not related to James Watson, is well known as the engraver of the series of six *Beauties of Windsor*, after Lely; but his plates after Reynolds' pictures contain some of his very best work, and first among them is the beautiful whole-length portrait of *Lady Bampfylde*, one of the choicest specimens of mezzotint, and of which we give a reproduction. In 1778 Watson joined William Dickinson in a publishing business in New Bond Street, and it was from this address that the *Lady Bampfylde* was published, May 1, 1779. Dickinson began mezzotinting when quite young, and his hundred or so plates include a number of really fine examples. A plate that shows his style as well as any is the whole-length portrait of *Diana, Viscountess Crosbie*, after Reynolds; and this we reproduce. Dickinson removed to Paris at the end of the century, where he worked, and died in 1823.

But we must pass on to say a few words about John Raphael Smith, who was born in 1752, and died in 1812. Among all the engravers the art of mezzotint has produced, J. R. Smith is perhaps the most skilful and accomplished. His scraping has all the strength and vigour of a man who is complete master of his craft, while his training as a painter enabled him to add to his touch the true feeling of the artist. He was first apprenticed to a draper in his native town of Derby, but coming to London he soon abandoned the counter,

and by 1769 issued his first plate. From that time his progress was rapid, and his command of the technique became more and more complete, until he was able to engrave plates that are acknowledged masterpieces of the art of mezzotint. His plates number well over 200; and whether he was interpreting Reynolds, Romney, Lawrence, Peters, or Gainsborough, he brought to bear upon his work the skill and talent necessary to give effect to each painter's style.

The frontispiece to this volume is a collotype reproduction of Raphael Smith's delightful whole-length portrait of *Mrs. Carnac*, engraved in 1778 from the painting by Reynolds, now in the Wallace collection, and it is a wonderful specimen of refined mezzotinting. In the first chapter we gave a specimen of his genius in the *Lady Pelham Clinton feeding Chickens* (see p. 12), and in the present one we reproduce *The Fortune-Teller*, a most attractive plate after the Rev. William Peters, engraved in 1786, and companion to *The Gamesters*, engraved by William Ward.

George Morland found an admirable translator in Raphael Smith, as well as in his two relatives William and James Ward; and these three mezzotinters produced some of the choicest plates, after the wayward painter, that to-day realise such high prices.

William Ward was trained as a mezzotinter by Raphael Smith, and soon achieved success. He was appointed mezzotinter to the Duke of York and to the Prince of Wales, and in 1814 was elected an A.R.A. He engraved quite forty subjects after his brother-in-law George Morland, but his most celebrated achievement is the *Daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland*, after Hoppner (see p. 126), which always commands a very high price for

THE FORTUNE TELLER

(*From the Mezzotint by John Raphael Smith after Rev. W. Peters*, 1786)

good impressions. He also engraved *The Snake in the Grass*, after Reynolds, and the pair of domestic subjects, *The Romps* and *The Truants*, after W. R. Bigg. James Ward, who, by the way, was born in the same year as Wellington and Napoleon, and who lived until 1859, was a most agreeable painter as well as engraver. Unfortunately for mezzotinting, in about the year 1817 he put aside the scraper to devote himself almost entirely to the brush; but not before he had finished many beautiful plates. From among them we reproduce the delightful subject of country life, *The Dairy Farm*, engraved from the picture he himself had painted. Fortunately for students of mezzotint engraving, James Ward presented six volumes of his proofs to the British Museum when he forsook the art.

As the century turned, and the demand for mezzotints became greater, a difficulty arose in that the copper on which the engravings were done would not yield a sufficient number of impressions. To overcome the difficulty, it was thought that a remedy might be found by working upon a harder metal, and William Say, in the year 1820, was the first mezzotinter to employ steel, in a portrait of *Queen Caroline*. With the introduction of steel the art of mezzotint declined; for the harder metal would not yield impressions of the rich velvety quality obtainable from copper.

Still, the nineteenth century has had its highly-important practitioners, as the mention of such names as George Clint, Henry Meyer, S. W. Reynolds, David Lucas, Charles Turner, and Samuel Cousins is sufficient to prove. George Clint engraved the *Trial of Queen Katherine*, after G. H. Harlow; Henry Meyer is known as the master of Thomas Lupton and the engraver

of *Lady Hamilton, as 'Nature,'* after Romney, of which an impression in colours recently sold for 470 guineas; David Lucas is inseparably associated with those wonderful translations of Constable's landscapes; Charles Turner is remembered as the most prolific mezzotinter of the nineteenth century; and Samuel Cousins was the only mezzotinter upon whom was bestowed the honour of R.A. We reproduce one of Samuel Cousins' most popular plates, the portrait of *Master Lambton*, engraved in 1837, after the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

Our *résumé* of mezzotint would be sadly incomplete were we not to mention the most important series of engravings that was published by J. M. W. Turner under the title 'Liber Studiorum.' As Turner trained a number of line engravers to engrave his 'England and Wales' and 'Southern Coast' series, so he assisted a group of mezzotinters—including Charles Turner, Say, Lupton, H. Dawe, and Clint—to reproduce in mezzotint a specially-prepared set of drawings, made for the purpose of rivalling a similar set of studies by Claude, that had been mezzotinted by Richard Earlom some years before and published under the title 'Liber Veritatis.' In this 'Liber Studiorum' series we have landscape plates brought to the highest excellence; but we are unable to show a specimen, as the charm and effects of the original engraving would be lost in the reproduction by the half-tone process. However, an extremely fine collection of 'Liber Studiorum' proofs and prints is preserved and can be seen in the Print Room of the British Museum, and it has recently been very much enriched by the addition of a hundred working and touched proofs and prints of the greatest importance and value, bequeathed by the late Henry Vaughan.

THE DAIRY FARM

(*From the Mezzotint by James Ward after a Painting by himself*)

MASTER LAMBTON

(*From the Mezzotint by Samuel Cousins after Sir T. Lawrence*, 1827)

MASTER LAMBTON

(From the Mezzotint by Samuel Cousins after Sir T. Lawrence, 1827)

CHAPTER V

STIPPLE AND AQUATINT

STIPPLE engraving, or engraving by dots instead of by lines, has been considered by some as lacking in character, weakly sentimental, and monotonous; while others have eulogised the style as the one best fitted for the expression of beauty and elegance. We do not propose to hold a brief for either side, but will endeavour to explain the method, to point out how the results were obtained, and to mention the principal exponents of the style with a few of the plates they produced.

We must, however, begin by stating that, with some few exceptions, notably those by J. Raphael Smith, there is little of the original expression of the painter-engraver to be found in stipple work, which in consequence betrays the shortcomings of the copyist. But at the same time there is distinct beauty in the results achieved, as we think all who glance at the prints we have selected for reproduction will readily agree.

The student of prints will find stipple or dotted work, in a more or less degree, among the engravings by many of the early artists, such as Giulio Campagnola of the Italian School, Dürer of the German, and Lucas van Leyden of the Dutch—all working at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

About the year 1589 Johann Kellerdaller of

Dresden engraved a few plates entirely in dots; and nearly a hundred years later, Jan Lutma of Amsterdam produced several hammered engravings, also entirely in dots; but in Lutma's *opus mallei* process, as he called it, each dot was made by the tedious operation of punch and mallet. Ludwig von Siegen, the inventor of mezzotint, was acquainted with dotted engraving, for he alluded to it in his letter to the Landgrave of Hesse, dated 1642, as 'a method hitherto very uncommon called puncturing, executed entirely with points, and with great labour.'

But the stipple engravings that engage the attention of the collector are not these primitive efforts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the work done by the artists of the latter half of the eighteenth: Bartolozzi, Burke, Knight, Tomkins, J. R. Smith, Caroline Watson, Cheesman, and others. As to the inventor of this more modern method of stipple engraving there is considerable doubt, and among the several artists who have been mentioned as the author of the invention is Jean Charles François, who was born at Nancy in 1717. However, as the genuine claimant has not been satisfactorily identified, we will not discuss the question, but be satisfied by stating that, as in the case of mezzotint, the art originated on the Continent, that it was introduced into England by the unfortunate William Wynne Ryland, and was enthusiastically taken up by Bartolozzi, who founded the great school of English stipple engraving.

Before proceeding further, let us in a few words consider how the work was performed. The engraver first laid an etching ground upon his copper plate, and then outlined his subject by pricking dots through the wax with an etching needle. Next he proceeded to fill in the shadows

LADY ELIZABETH FOSTER
(From the Stipple Engraving by F. Bartolozzi, after Sir J. Reynolds, 1787)

LADY SMYTH AND CHILDREN

(From the Stipple Engraving by F. Bartolozzi after Sir J. Reynolds, 1789)

(apprentices being employed on the less important parts), and afterwards the plate was bitten as for an ordinary etching. These processes being completed, and the etching ground having been removed, the engraver re-entered most of the bitten dots with a specially shaped graver, known as a stipple-graver, and so by a combination of etching, dry-point, and graver work completed his stipple engraving. To give clearness to the written explanation, we reproduce a portion of the portrait of *Emma, Lady Hamilton*, from John Jones's engraving, after Romney's picture (see p. 68). This engraving has been selected, as the stippling of the original is rather coarse, and consequently an enlargement to only twice the scale of the print has been sufficient to make the technique of the work quite apparent. For comparison with this enlarged fragment we give a reproduction of the entire engraving, a beautiful specimen of the style, engraved in 1785.

About the time George III. became the patron of fine arts, a number of foreign artists came over to England, and with them the painters Giovanni Cipriani and Angelica Kauffmann, and the engravers Bartolozzi and Schiavonetti; and it was the pictures by these two painters that gave the impetus to stipple engraving in this country in the hands of Ryland, and of Bartolozzi and his school.

As we have said, the art was brought to England by W. W. Ryland, who had worked at Paris under Boucher the painter and Jacques Philippe Le Bas the engraver. Ryland was the eldest of the seven sons of Edward Ryland, an engraver and copper-plate printer, and he was born in the Old Bailey in 1732. By a singular coincidence and terrible misfortune he ended his days at Tyburn, during a violent

thunderstorm, for forging bank-notes. While on the Continent Ryland acquired the chalk or dotted manner of engraving from François, and soon after his return to this country, after an absence of about five years, he commenced to work in the new method. About this time he received the appointment of engraver to George III., and afterwards he entered into partnership with his pupil, Henry Bryer, and opened a print shop at the Royal Exchange in Cornhill. Ryland had seasons of prosperity and periods of adversity. At one time he is said to have made an income of £3000 a year, and at another he was reduced to penury by his extravagance. In December 1771 the Ryland and Bryer business became bankrupt, and then, Mrs. Frankau* tells us, Ryland went almost penniless to Angelica Kauffmann (to whom he had been introduced four years previously) who set him upon his feet again, by permitting him to take away a portfolio of her water-colour drawings to translate by stipple engraving, and to print in colours by a process he had learnt in Paris. After this event a period of prosperity returned, and in 1775 Ryland started in business at 159 Strand, from which address he issued a large number of prints, many of them after his patroness, Angelica Kauffmann. At this shop Bartolozzi was a frequent visitor; but the success of the new venture led Ryland again into extravagance which, in its turn, opened the way to his ultimate ruin.

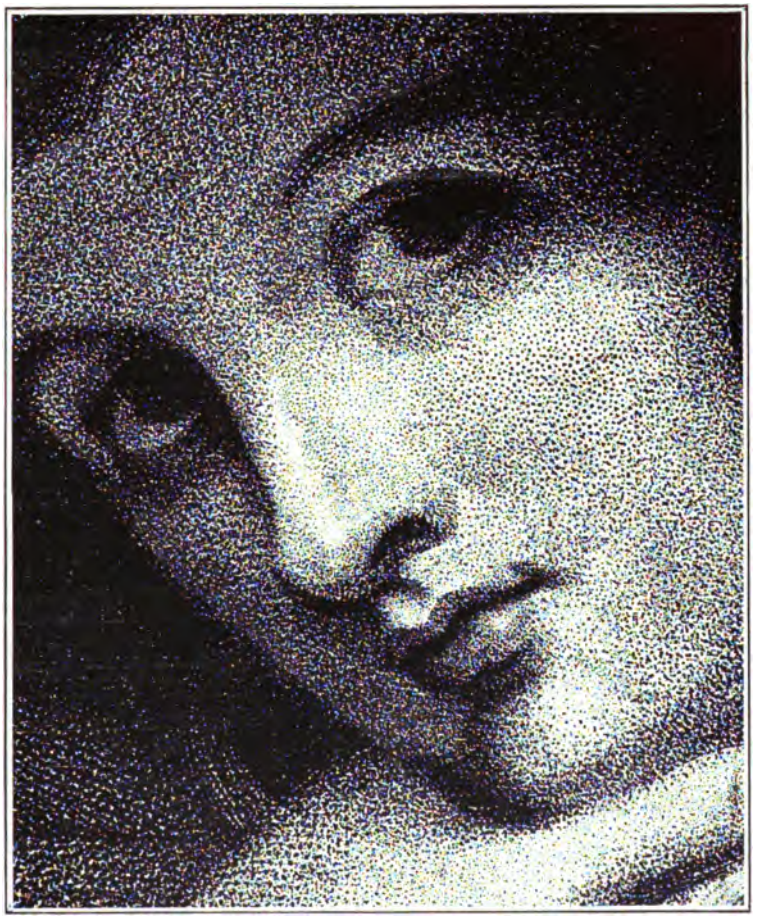
From this time the art of stipple engraving quickly spread, gained an immense popularity in this country, and flourished until about 1810.

Though in the hands of Ryland stipple achieved great success, it was reserved to Bartolozzi to become the chief exponent of the art, and to

* 'Eighteenth Century Colour Prints,' by Mrs. Julia Frankau. 1900.

EMMA, LADY HAMILTON

(*From the Stipple Engraving by John Jones after George Romney*, 1785)



SPECIMEN OF STIPPLE WORK, FROM THE PORTRAIT OF LADY HAMILTON

(*Enlarged to twice the scale of the original Engraving*)

really found the school. Bartolozzi was born at Florence in 1727, and there with Cipriani he studied art. Coming to England at the age of thirty-seven, he worked with great industry, and at first was Cipriani's fellow-lodger in Warwick Street, Golden Square, and later on was his neighbour at North End, Fulham. Profiting by the stipple wave that had been set in motion by Ryland, Bartolozzi directed his whole energy to the dotted method of engraving, and being a facile craftsman possessing the power of giving grace, beauty, and delicacy to his work, he issued plate after plate exactly suited to the tastes of his day, and the impressions sold with great rapidity. As the demand increased, so did the supply; and in the end some two thousand or more plates were produced bearing the name of Bartolozzi as their engraver. Needless to say, this enormous number of plates was not the product of one man's handiwork, for many of them contained very little of the master's engraving. Indeed, Bartolozzi gathered round him a number of brilliant pupils—Tomkins, Cheesman, Ogborne, and others—who paid high premiums and whose work during their years of association with their master added lustre to the artist's fame. But we must remember that it redounds to Bartolozzi's genius and ability that he was able to train and produce such distinguished pupils. The output ascribed to Bartolozzi was therefore that of an *atelier* rather than the work of a single craftsman. From the mass of Bartolozzi engravings we reproduce the delightful and well-known portrait of *Lady Elizabeth Foster* (Duchess of Devonshire), after Sir Joshua Reynolds, engraved in 1787, and published by William Dickinson, the mezzotinter and stipple engraver; and also the group of *Lady Smyth and Children*, engraved after the same

painter two years later, a plate which worthily represents the engraver and the style of work with which he is chiefly identified. We have reproduced the former by the collotype process in order that the result may be as faithful as possible.

In 1802 Bartolozzi left England to take charge of the National Academy at Lisbon, and there he died in 1815. The great reputation gained by Bartolozzi's engravings caused a number of plates to be fraudulently produced in imitation of his style. Among them were some made to pass current with the unwary by putting the name 'Bartolotti' as the engraver. Therefore, should the amateur be offered prints bearing the inscription 'Engraved by Bartolotti,' he will know them to be spurious.

Of the pupils of Bartolozzi, Peltro William Tomkins, the younger son of William Tomkins, a landscape painter, may be considered the most accomplished; and collectors should endeavour to possess a representative selection of his prints. Many of his plates have the attractive charm of a subtle beauty, and his children and fancy subjects (many from his own designs), enjoy a well-deserved popularity. Tomkins was historical engraver to Queen Charlotte, and drawing master to the Princesses; and for some years had a shop at 49 New Bond Street, from which address he published a number of prints, and, in 1797, the sumptuous edition of Thomson's 'Seasons,' containing stipple engravings by himself and Bartolozzi, after William Hamilton. The complete list of Tomkins's works would be a long one, and to enumerate his prints would occupy space without much helping the collector. We may mention, however, *Hobbinol and Ganderetta* after Gains-

MRS. SIDDONS

(*From the Stipple Engraving by Peltro W. Tomkins after John Downman*)

LADY HAMILTON, AS THE 'SPINSTER'

(*From the Stipple Engraving by Thomas Cheesman after George Romney*, 1789)

borough, *Maternal Love* after Russell, *Morning* and *Evening*, a pair after W. Hamilton, and the delightful portrait of *Mrs. Siddons* after Downman, of which we give an illustration. The charm and beauty of this engraving must have been a source of keen satisfaction to even Downman himself.

The most popular engraving executed by Thomas Cheesman is the whole-length portrait of Lady Hamilton seated at a spinning-wheel, after Romney, known as *The Spinster*, and of which we give a reproduction. Another popular engraving is the group of three boys—*Lord Grantham and his Brothers*—after Reynolds, published in 1791, and he also engraved *The Lady's Last Stake* after Hogarth. Besides portraits of contemporary celebrities, his numerous plates include religious and mythological subjects from the Italian painters, mostly published by himself from addresses in Oxford Street, Newman Street, and Francis Street.

John Ogborne—the third pupil of Bartolozzi we have mentioned—produced a great number of portrait and other plates after such painters as Hamilton, Bigg, Westall, Stothard, and Romney, many of which are sought for by collectors, especially the *Mrs. Jordan as the Country Girl* after the last-named painter, which is a good specimen of his style.

The English painters soon discovered that their work translated into stipple quickly gained public favour, and so Singleton, Wheatley, De Loutherbourg, Cosway, and other prominent artists of the time, sought interpreters for their paintings from among the ranks of the stipple engravers. Not only did stipple attract the attention of painters, but several mezzotinters, possibly seeing profit in the new art, practised it, and engraved sometimes in the one style and sometimes in the other. John Jones, Richard Earlom, J. Raphael Smith,

William Dickinson, Thomas Watson, William Ward, and Charles Turner all devoted some of their time to stipple, and frequently with the most successful results. We have seen John Jones as a mezzotinter, and in this chapter we have to record his skill in the great number of stipple plates he engraved. By his hand, besides the *Emma, Lady Hamilton*, already noticed, we have a number of Reynolds's well-known children subjects, *Robinetta, Muscipula, Collina, Sylvia*, and one or two others, the popular *Serena* after Romney, and the fine example of grace and beauty, *Frances Kemble* after Downman, which makes an admirable *pendant* to her sister, *Mrs. Siddons*, after the same painter. Both plates will be found among the illustrations. Earlom's fairly large number of stipples include *Sensibility* and *Alope*, both after Romney, that have, unfortunately, been too well made known by the hundreds of modern reprints or reproductions from them that have been spread broadcast upon the market.

John Raphael Smith outshone his fellows in the field of mezzotint; and even in stipple he holds a position among the foremost practitioners. He was an artist through and through; and being at the same time a craftsman having a dexterous hold upon his tool, it mattered little to him whether he handled a brush, a scraper, or a stipple graver, when once the technicalities of the various crafts were overcome. By J. R. Smith we have *Delia in Town* and *Delia in the Country, Domestic Happiness, The Elopement, The Virtuous Parent, Dressing for the Masquerade, The Tavern Door*, and *The Fair Penitent*, all after George Morland; *A Loisir* and *Narcissa*, from his own designs; *The Snake in the Grass* after Reynolds, and a great many more. The collector of stipple

MISS FRANCES KEMBLE

(*From the Stipple Engraving by John Jones after John Downman*, 1784)

MILK BELOW, MAIDS

FROM 'THE CRIES OF LONDON'

(*From the Stipple Engraving by Luigi Schiavonetti after F. Wheatley*, 1793)

engravings will not willingly let a good Raphael Smith pass.

Dickinson rendered a number of Bunbury's caricatures in stipple, but he also engraved *The Gardens of Carlton House* (with Neapolitan Ballad Singers) after Bunbury, *Perdita* (Mrs. Robinson), wearing large hat and feathers, after Reynolds, '*Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*,' after Peters, and *The Duchess of Devonshire with Viscountess Duncannon* after Kauffmann. And Charles Turner, though he did not stipple many plates, engraved *Miss Bowles* after J. R. Smith, and *Mlle. Parisot*, the dancer, after I. J. Masquerier.

From the circumstance that a number of engravers worked in two or more styles, it is easy to understand how the 'mixed method' of engraving—in which etching, mezzotint, stipple, and sometimes aquatint were combined in one plate—came gradually to be introduced. This mixed method became very general after the adoption of steel in about the year 1820, and possibly one of its most skilful exponents was William Walker, whose portrait of *Robert Burns*, in this combined style, was produced with the help of Samuel Cousins.

The great popularity of stipple, in the eyes of the public of a century ago, attracted most of the engravers of the time to work in the method; and among the most important, other than those we have mentioned, were Schiavonetti, Burke, Ryder, Caroline Watson, Condé, Cardon, Collyer, Gaugain, Knight, Nutter, and Simon, while the range of subject extended beyond portraits and fancy subjects on plates of small dimensions, to illustrations of history and literature engraved on a large scale. Luigi Schiavonetti, who came from Italy in 1790, at first assisted Bartolozzi and improved the techni-

calities of the process. He launched into historical subjects and worked upon a series of plates illustrating the final scenes in the life of Louis XVI., besides which he engraved a large plate of *The Landing of the British Troops in Egypt* after De Loutherbourg, and *The Fall of Tippoo Sahib* after Singleton. He also engraved portraits of *Lady Cawdor* after H. Edridge, and *The Hon. Anne Damer* after R. Cosway, *The Ghost* after Westall, and *The Mask* (from the picture of the Marlborough family) after Sir Joshua Reynolds. But perhaps his most talked-of engraving was *The Canterbury Pilgrims* after Stothard, which was prepared in opposition to Blake's well-known plate of the same subject. Schiavonetti had only completed the preliminary etching for this engraving when he died, in 1810; and the plate was subsequently finished in line by James Heath. As a specimen of Schiavonetti's best work we reproduce *Milk below, Maids*, from Wheatley's very famous series of thirteen plates of 'The Cries of London.'

Thomas Burke began by learning to mezzotint, under Dixon; but he soon abandoned the process for stipple engraving and worked a number of plates of exceptional delicacy and richness, after Angelica Kauffmann, including the beautiful group of *Lady Rushout and Children*, which we have already reproduced (see p. 16), and which is considered one of his finest performances.

Thomas Ryder divided his attention between line engraving and stipple; but his principal plates were done in the latter method and are exceedingly good. They include portraits and subjects after many of the painters of his day, and among the subjects are *The Last Supper* after West, and *The Murder of James I. of Scotland* after Opie. Ryder died in the same year as Schiavonetti.

MRS. PARKYNS (AFTERWARDS LADY RANCLIFFE)

(*From the Stipple Engraving by Charles Wilkin after John Hoppner*, 1795)

LADY CHARLOTTE CAMPBELL

(*From the Stipple Engraving by Charles Wilkin after John Hoppner*, 1799)

Caroline Watson was the daughter of the eminent mezzotinter James Watson; and inheriting her father's gifts, she devoted herself to engraving, sometimes in mezzotint but chiefly in stipple. Her work was of great merit, and obtained for her the appointment of engraver to Queen Charlotte. She was very industrious, for Le Blanc catalogues no less than 153 portraits by her hand, and besides these she engraved sacred and other subjects.

John Condé is chiefly known by his charming portraits after Cosway, including ladies of the court of the Prince Regent, which find great favour with collectors at the present day. Many of his portraits are enclosed within rather wide frames composed of lines of various thicknesses. His most popular engraving is probably the whole-length portrait of *Mrs. Fitzherbert* after Cosway.

Anthony Cardon was the son of a Flemish artist, and besides notable portraits of such celebrities as *George III.*, *Pitt*, *Madame Récamier*, *Madame Catalani*, and *Napoleon*, he engraved three of Wheatley's *Cries of London*, and *The Battle of Maida* and *The Battle of Alexandria* after P. J. De Loutherbourg. For this last named the Society of Arts awarded him their gold medal.

Joseph Collyer was born in London in 1748, and studied engraving under Anthony Walker. He holds a prominent place among stipple engravers, and is perhaps best known by his portraits of *Mrs. Fitzherbert* after J. Russell, and *Miss Farren* after J. Downman. He also engraved portraits and subject-pieces in line, *The Volunteers of Dublin*, 1779, after Wheatley, being one of the latter.

Thomas Gaugain, a native of Abbeville, learnt to paint under Houston, and was attracted to stipple by the work of Ryland. He found stippling a profitable employment, and engraved both portraits

and subject-pieces after many of the painters of the day.

Charles Knight, a pupil of Bartolozzi, is believed to have done most of the work upon the whole-length portrait of *Miss Farren* (Countess of Derby) carrying a large muff, after Sir Thomas Lawrence, although the finished state of the plate bears the name of Bartolozzi as the engraver. In addition to this plate Knight did many really fine ones, including the portrait of *The Duchess of York* after Beechey, and a number after Reynolds, Lawrence, etc., as well as subject-pieces after Kauffmann, Peters, Wheatley, Hoppner, and a number of other painters.

William Nutter has not left a great number of plates, probably because he died at the early age of about forty-three in 1802; but among the few are several well-known ones such as *A Lecture on Gadding* and *The Moralist* after J. R. Smith, *Captain Coram* after Hogarth, *Mrs. Hartley and Child* after Reynolds, and *The Ale House Door*, *The Farm Yard*, and *The Absent Father* after Singleton.

Pierre Simon is seen at his best in the *Angels' Heads* (see p. 16) from the picture by Reynolds in the National Gallery.

William Ward, the mezzotinter, stippled a number of plates after J. R. Smith and George Morland. Among those after the former we have *Thoughts on Matrimony*, and after the latter *The First Pledge of Love*, and *Constancy* and *Variety*.

To these masters of stipple must be added Charles Wilkin, who engraved many plates from paintings by Hoppner, including a series of portraits of 'Ladies of Rank and Fashion,' now expensive to discover, from which we select *Lady Charlotte Campbell*, one of the most prized, for reproduction. Besides this series, we have the beautiful print of

THE SHIPWRECK

(*From the Aquatint by Theodore Fielding after J. M. W. Turner*, 1825)

SPECIMEN OF AQUATINT WORK, FROM 'THE SHIPWRECK'

(*Enlarged to three times the scale of the original Engraving*)

Lady Cockburn and her Children, from Reynolds's picture which hung for many years in the National Gallery. Owing, however, to some informality, it was relinquished by the trustees recently, and has since passed into the possession of Mr. Beit. There is also the admirable portrait of *Mrs. Parkyns* (Lady Rancliffe) after Hoppner, which we reproduce. It is engraved in a somewhat different style from the *Lady Charlotte Campbell*, but is an exceedingly good example of stipple work, and is dated 1795.

The laborious task of covering a large surface with dots, necessary in some of the historical subjects that were engraved in stipple, caused the engravers to investigate and experiment in the hope that they might discover some simpler method of performing the work. The result was the invention of aquatint engraving. In manipulating this process the engraver requires special care and experience; for as the photographer needs to exercise great judgment as to the power and effect of daylight, so the aquatinter must know how his materials and acids will work under varying atmospheric conditions and temperatures.

When starting upon an aquatint, the operator has a choice between two foundations upon which to do his work: he may either lay what is technically termed a 'spirit ground,' or he may lay a 'dust ground.' To lay a spirit ground the artist takes a carefully cleaned copper plate, and covers it with a solution composed of resin and spirits of wine. As the spirits evaporate and leave a film of resin to dry upon the plate, the resin contracts, and in so doing splits up into a multitude of minute grains or particles around which the surface of the metal becomes exposed. The amateur who has read the chapter on etching will understand that when the plate is submitted to the action of acid, after

this resinous ground has been left upon its surface, the mordant will be unable to attack the copper under the minute hills or islands of resin, but will be free to act upon the spaces of exposed metal around them. To lay a dust ground, the artist uses a carefully made box, the inner sides of which are quite smooth, and into this box he places some very finely-powdered resin. The box is then made to revolve so that the interior may be filled with an even cloud of resin dust. The copper plate (which must be quite clean) is next inserted at the bottom of the box and the dust is allowed to settle upon it. Then the plate is withdrawn, and the resin particles are fixed upon it by means of heat, after which the plate is ready for treatment by the acid as in the case of the spirit-grounded plate. Such, then, in a rough and ready way, are the fundamental principles of aquatinting; and after the outline of the subject has been transferred and perhaps etched, the gradations and shadows are produced by a succession of careful bitings performed in the way we have previously endeavoured to explain.

Aquatinting was invented in France, and introduced into England about the year 1775, by Paul Sandby, who engraved many excellent plates in this method. The French artists seem to have preferred the dust ground, and the English the spirit ground method. The process is very suitable, and has been chiefly employed here, for landscapes, sea views, and architectural and topographical subjects; but in France portraits and figure subjects have been treated with marked success, and are now much sought after. Though aquatinting has not been taken up with the enthusiasm bestowed upon other styles of engraving, we cannot help believing that its possibilities have not yet been fully demonstrated. We think the

LE FORGERON
(From the Aquatint by Eugène Delacroix)

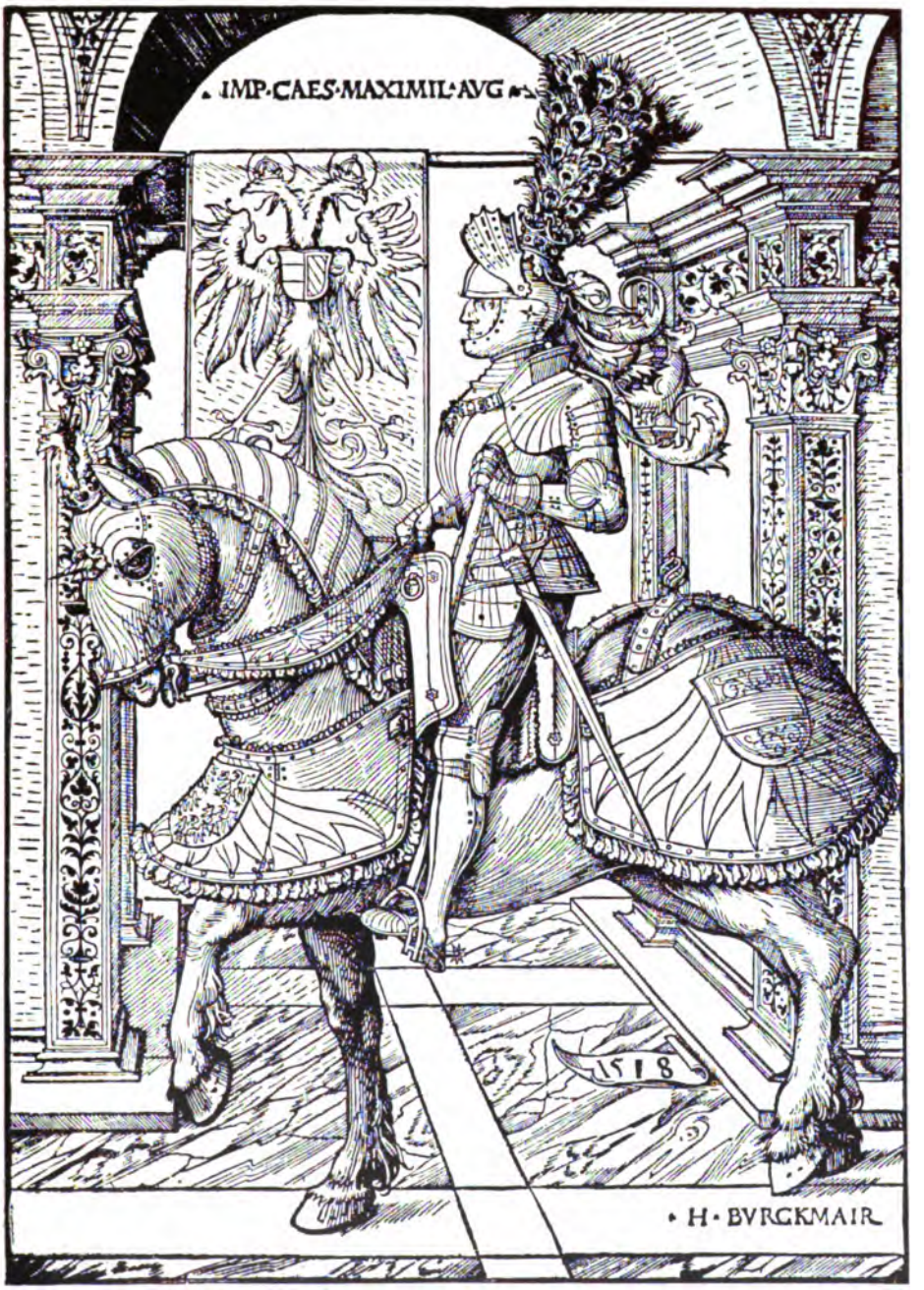
reader will consider the method capable of great results when he examines the reproduction of *The Shipwreck*, by Theodore Fielding (one of the chief workers in aquatint) from the painting by J. M. W. Turner. The vigour and gradation of tone, the effects of wave and sky, and the vivid realities of the scene, qualify the method to take a worthy place among the various processes of the graphic arts. We have selected a portion of the boat on the left in the middle distance, and enlarged it to three times the scale of the original engraving, to illustrate the explanation of the spirit process we have given, and to afford the student an opportunity to examine the technical characteristics of the style. We also reproduce (in collotype) the exceedingly interesting early state of *Le Forgeron*, by Eugène Delacroix. It is a subject well suited to the technique of aquatint, being charged with the intense contrasts of light and shade inseparable from a smithy. The plate being of small dimensions, we are able to reproduce it the same size as the original engraving; and (and this is of great interest to the student of aquatint) Delacroix has left a strip of aquatint work on each side of the subject, which shows clearly the various bitings by which he arrived at his result.

CHAPTER VI

WOODCUTS AND LITHOGRAPHS

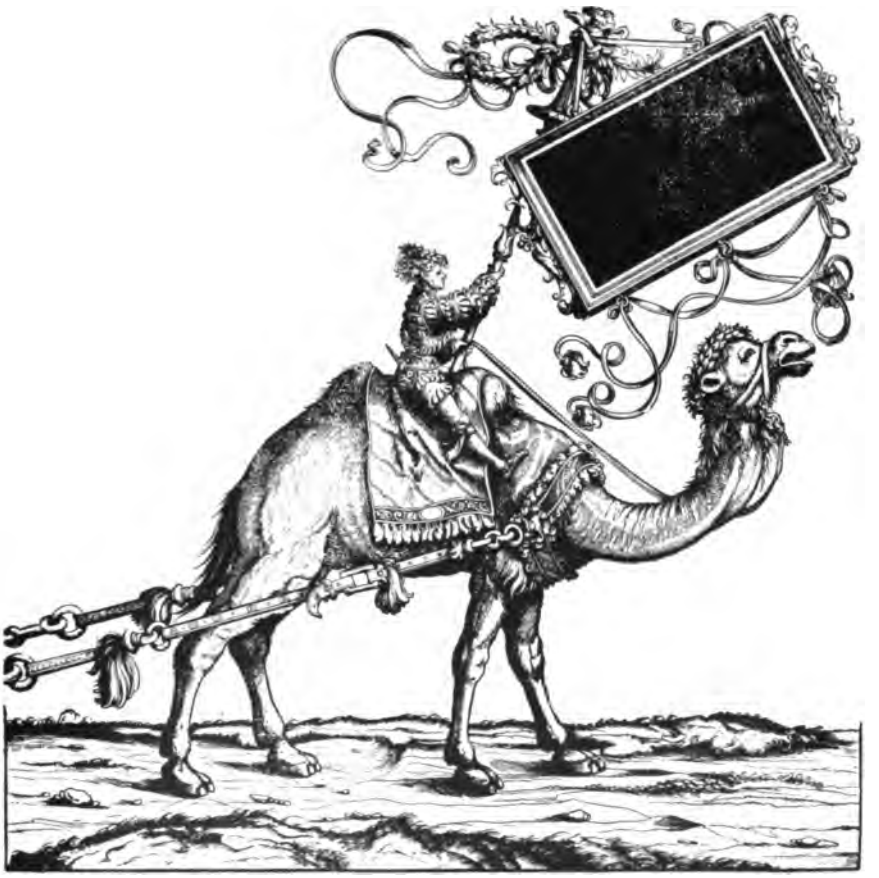
MENTION of wood engraving and lithography has been reserved until now in order to avoid confusion, for the methods of operation in these two branches of the graphic arts are essentially different from those in the styles of engraving we have hitherto endeavoured to describe. And, further, as wood engravings and lithographs are produced by processes quite distinct from one another, we may consider them in the same chapter, for there can be no confusion between them.

Though it may not be the fashion just now to collect woodcuts, still there are connoisseurs, not a few, who devote much time and care to their study, and, therefore, a brief consideration of them must not be omitted. The art of the woodcutter boasts of great antiquity; and, besides crude devotional figures and similar *incunabula*, the earliest playing cards are believed to have been roughly cut on blocks of wood. Before the invention of movable types for book printing, blocks were cut which, besides a primitive illustration of a Biblical or other subject, included a short explanatory text cut in relief upon the wood. These examples of the art are known as *block-books*, and the 'Biblia Pauperum,' or Bible of the poor, of about the year 1470, is a notable example. The earliest books printed with movable types were frequently embellished with woodcut illustrations; but as these specimens engage the attention of the



PORTRAIT OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN

(*From the Woodcut by Hans Burgkmair*, 1518)



FROM THE TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION OF MAXIMILIAN

(*From the Woodcut by Hans Burgkmair, about* 1519)

book- rather than the print- collector we will pass them by, and come to wood engraving as a separate art, practised by important and well-known artists.

To explain the craft of the wood-engraver, Mr. Hamerton gives a simple but very effective illustration. He tells us that if we take a sheet of white paper, and, with a pen, write a letter upon it, we are really making a pen-and-ink sketch upon the white paper. This part would correspond with the work of the draughtsman upon the block of wood. Then if we take a brush charged with a water-colour, say vermilion, and carefully paint over the surface of the white paper, leaving only the pen strokes untouched, we shall have the pen-and-ink sketch upon apparently vermilion paper. This vermilion brush-work would correspond with the work performed by the woodcutter. After the subject has been drawn upon the wood, it is the business of the engraver to cut and plough away the wood to an appreciable depth, from all the blank portions between and around the lines of the subject, and by so doing to leave these lines standing in relief. In the early period of the art the cutting was done with a knife upon rather thin pieces of apple, pear, lime, or some other soft wood, cut the plank way of the grain; but from the days of Bewick, that is from about 1785, it has been done with the graver on blocks of boxwood cut transversely, and of a thickness equal to the diameter of a shilling, which is the gauge for the height of type.

In saying a word as to the printing of woodcuts, and of copper and steel plates, it must be remembered that in wood engraving, as just explained, the lines of the subject stand up in relief, while in metal-plate engraving they are cut or bitten into the surface of the metal. A wood block is printed in the same press that is used for printing from type,

and the pressure is brought down vertically upon the block. In steel or copper plate printing, after the plate has been well inked by a dabber, and the ink has been rubbed off again from its surface with canvas, so that it only remains in the sunken lines, a sheet of damp paper is laid upon the plate, a piece of special blanket is placed over it, and the plate is then made to pass between steel cylinders, when the crushing force exerted is so great that the damp paper is forced into the sunken lines of the engraved plate and takes out the ink they contain.

The great early epoch of wood-cutting was during the first half of the sixteenth century, and the art chiefly flourished in Germany, though the Low Countries hold an honourable second place. When woodcuts are ascribed to such artists as Dürer, Burgkmair, Holbein, etc., it must be understood that these men frequently did not do the actual knife-work, but simply drew the designs upon the wood, and then handed over the cutting to dexterous craftsmen whose work they carefully supervised. The principal artists of this period were: Dürer, the greatest exponent; Lucas Cranach, the friend of Luther and artist of the Reformation; Michel Wolgemut, the master of Dürer; Holbein, the designer of the incomparable series known as *The Dance of Death*, which was cut by Hans Lützelburger; Hans Burgkmair, the designer of the *Triumphal Procession of Maximilian*; Altdorfer, Brosamer, Grün, Lucas van Leyden, and some others.

It was at the beginning of the sixteenth century that the Emperor Maximilian gave encouragement to the art by commissioning several great woodcut undertakings to immortalise his achievements. The two most important of these were a *Triumphal Arch* and a *Triumphal Procession*. The Arch was

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

(*From the Woodcut by Albrecht Dürer, about* 1505)

THE CHILLINGHAM BULL

(*From the Wood Engraving by Thomas Bewick*, 1789)

designed chiefly, if not entirely, by Dürer, and it was cut upon ninety-two blocks of wood, which, when pieced together, measured 10½ ft. by 9½ ft. There are three gateways, and the decoration includes portraits of Roman Emperors and of Maximilian's ancestors, as well as representations of the principal events of the Emperor's reign. The work was begun in 1515, and was not finished until several years after Maximilian's death in 1519. The purpose of the *Triumphal Procession* was 'to convey to posterity a pictorial representation of the splendour of Maximilian's court, his victories, and the extent of his possessions.' This work, like the preceding, was unfinished when the Emperor died, but, unlike it, it was never completed. Only 135 cuts were finished out of a contemplated 218. Burgkmair was the artist who designed most of the sections, on pear-tree blocks, and we reproduce one of the segments, which, though less elaborate than others, gives a fair idea of the masterly treatment. We also reproduce Burgkmair's equestrian portrait of *Maximilian*, in full armour, dated 1518.

From the large number of Dürer woodcuts, we have selected for illustration the charming, yet boldly rendered, *Flight into Egypt*, from the exceedingly important series of 'The Life of the Virgin.'

Perhaps the most highly-finished work of this early period is to be found in Holbein's famous *Dance of Death*, first published at Lyons in 1538. The forty cuts, each measuring but 2½ in. by 2 in., amply repay a careful study.

Italy, except perhaps in the north, did not in so active a manner practise wood-cutting; but the country is chiefly associated with that branch of the art known by the name of *chiaroscuro*. The effects of chiaroscuro prints are produced by printing the several portions of a subject in different tints

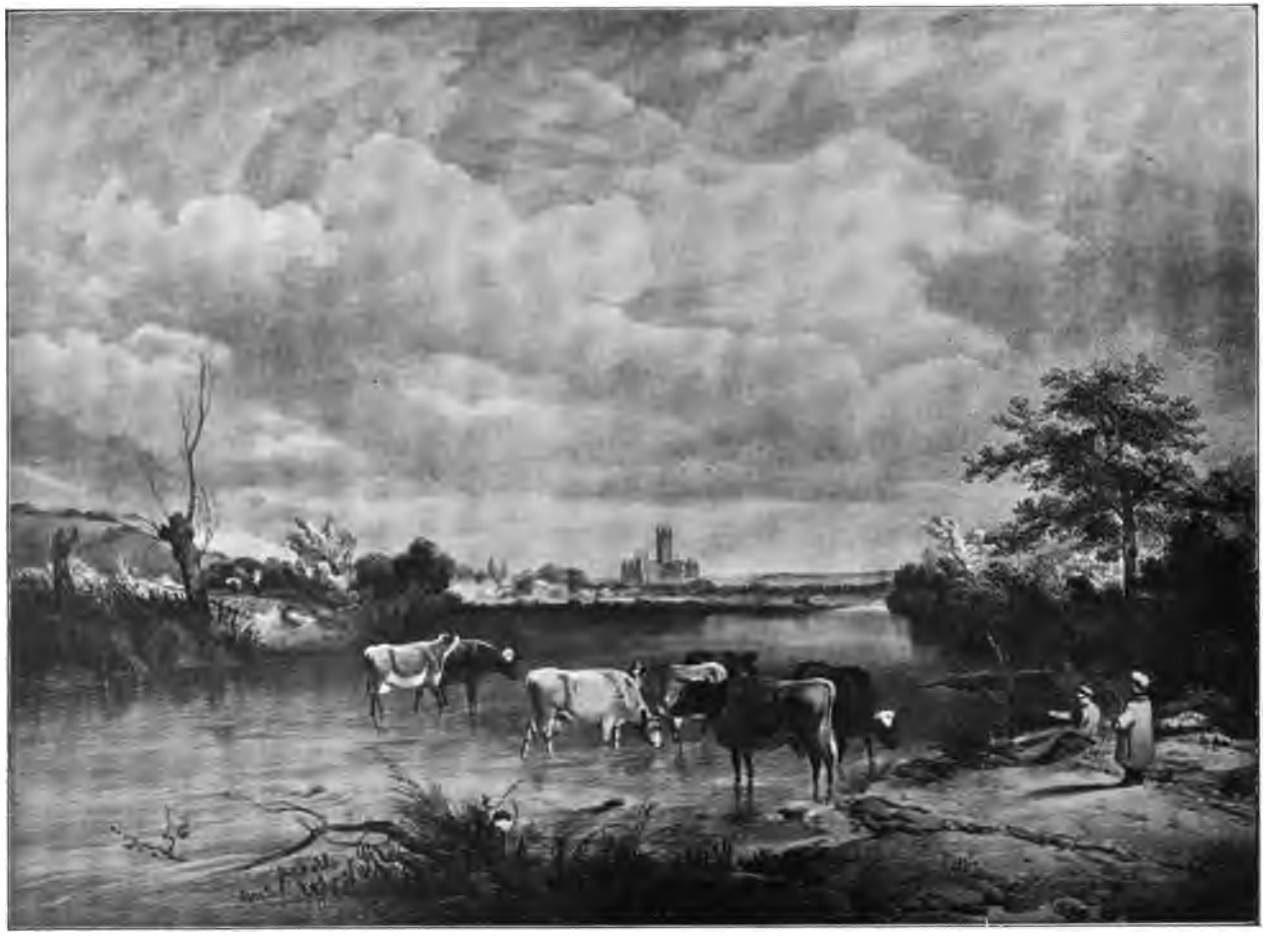
(each tint from a separate block) superimposed upon the same piece of paper. The process is, to all intents and purposes, the same as that used for colour-printing from relief blocks at the present day.

Between the years 1630 and 1770 the art of the woodcutter being overshadowed by that of the metal engraver, declined, and almost disappeared; and it was revived mainly by the genius, and under the influence, of Thomas Bewick of Newcastle. We reproduce one of his earliest and most important engravings, *The Chillingham Bull*, dated 1789, and for an impression of this cut as much as fifty guineas was once paid. Bewick introduced the graver as the cutting tool, instead of the knife, and he was also the great exponent of the *white line* method of wood engraving. In all the work of the early cutters, it was the interstices between the lines which were cut away, so as to produce (in the printed impression) black lines upon a white ground; but Bewick, in many parts of his blocks, reversed the process, and cut the *lines* of his subject upon the blocks (instead of cutting away the wood between them), and thus, in the finished result, produced white lines upon a black ground. A careful examination of *The Chillingham Bull* will reveal both methods of procedure. The work of the wood-engravers from Bewick's time onwards, though worthy of the collector's care, has been almost exclusively done for book illustration; so we will not now consider it.

During recent years there has been, for large and bold work, a return to the old method of cutting with a knife on planks of soft wood; and pleasing have frequently been the results. Probably the first important example of this revival (and the first occasion on which a prominent artist devoted his talents to such a purpose) was the poster,

WELLINGTON'S CHARGER, 'COPENHAGEN'

(*From the Lithograph by James Ward*, 1824)



DISTANT VIEW OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

(*From the Lithograph by Thomas Sidney Cooper*, 1833)

designed by Fred. Walker, which advertised the dramatised version of 'The Woman in White,' at the Olympic Theatre, some thirty years ago. And about ten years later, when Professor Herkomer was engaged upon the design for his immensely popular poster for the *Magazine of Art*, a search was made for the engraver whose initials—W. H. H.—appeared upon Fred. Walker's poster, so that he might cut the blocks. The craftsman, Mr. W. H. Hooper, was found, and he accepted the commission to engrave the design, though he had to make his own cutting tools, as suitable ones could not then be bought. This advertisement, it will be remembered, was to be seen upon most of the London hoardings about twenty years ago, and it was commented upon by *Punch*.

Lithography, which (as no cutting or engraving tools are employed) is, strictly speaking, not a process of engraving, is based upon the elementary fact that grease and water, being strongly opposed to each other, will not combine or associate. The almost accidental discovery of the art, rather more than a century ago, by Alois Senefelder, the Bavarian, we will pass over, but we may say that Senefelder's claim to the invention, or discovery, is unassailable, and the art, as he practised it, is practically the same as that practised to-day.

Briefly, the process may be described as follows:—Upon a piece of a special kind of limestone (to which a granulated surface has been given by rubbing a similar stone upon it) a reverse drawing is made with a greasy chalk. The stone is next submitted to the action of a weak acid, after which, when it is wetted and the printer passes his roller over it, charged with printing-ink, it is found that only the parts of the stone covered by the chalk drawing retain the ink, the other parts rejecting it absolutely.

Finally, a piece of damp paper is pressed upon the stone, and the result is a lithographic print. Instead of drawing direct upon the stone, the artist may make his design in lithographic chalk upon a grained 'transfer paper,' which can be transferred to the stone and treated as though drawn direct.

As time passed by, and the simplicity and cheapness of lithography came to be understood, the art degenerated into a commercial business, and became the vehicle for the feeble work of inartistic draughtsmen; but for many years it was widely employed by most of the best artists of the Continent and of England, who fully appreciated its capabilities, and brought it into deserved repute. A reason for this speedy popularity is to be found in the fact that in lithography, as in etching, the artist has a process he can work himself without much technical training; and therefore he and his public can come into direct communication with each other. By this it is not meant that the effects of lithography can vie with those of etching, but the personal element, the exhibition of the artist's work, first hand, and without the intervention of an interpreter, should and must count for much in the eyes of the collector. In a woodcut we have the artist's original drawing more or less weakened by the wood-cutter; but in a lithograph we have his autographic chalk drawing unimpaired.

For an illustration of this first-hand personal quality of lithography, we cannot do better than point to the delightful work of M. Fantin-Latour, whose reveries, overflowing with poetic feeling and drawn with exquisite grace, are so often inspired by the music of the four composers—Wagner, Berlioz, Brahms and Schumann. Between the year 1873 and the appearance of M. Hédiard's catalogue in 1892, M. Fantin-Latour produced upwards of a

'RADOUB D'UNE BARQUE À MARÉE BASSE'

(*From the Lithograph by Eugène Isabey*)

hundred lithographs (the number has gone on increasing), and much of the effect of his work has been created or enhanced by the character of the transfer paper employed for the lithographic chalk to be used upon, and by the liberal use of white scratched lines—features so prominent in some of the work of the last few years.

From about 1820 lithography became popular in this country, and among the artists who worked upon the stone, and whose prints deserve the care and attention of the collector, are James Ward, R.A., the mezzotinter and animal painter; Samuel Prout, whose rich architectural pieces have a wide repute; George Cattermole, known chiefly by his historical subjects; the veteran Sidney Cooper, who has just died, of landscape and cattle fame; Bonington, who, though English born, worked chiefly in France; Harding, Lane, and many others.

We reproduce two English lithographs. The first is a masterly portrait of Wellington's famous charger, *Copenhagen*, drawn upon the stone by James Ward, R.A., in May 1824; and the proof from which our reproduction was made was a special one, retouched by Ward himself. The second, the *Distant View of Canterbury Cathedral*, was drawn upon the stone by Thomas Sidney Cooper as long back as the year 1833. Even sixty-nine years ago Cooper was able to produce works in lithography worthy of the art, as this excellent example shows, and at the dawn of the twentieth century, though almost a centenarian, he was still able to work at the easel.

Lithography was practised in France with greater enthusiasm than in England, and the rapidity with which it could be worked doubtless helped to commend it to the temperament of the artists of that country. Moreover, the cheapness of pro-

duction enabled it to be employed in the lighter veins of satire and current event, and it is in these branches that we find most of the specimens of the art—the principal exponents being Daumier and Gavarni. But lithography was by no means overlooked by the more serious of French artists, and we reproduce a specimen by Eugène Isabey, entitled *Radoub d'une Barque à Marée Basse*, a powerful example of light and shade. Of the work of Henri Daumier we give, in collotype, the domestic tragedy entitled *La Rue Transnonian*, which is accounted the artist's *chef-d'œuvre*.

By about the year 1875 lithography had almost ceased to exist in this country as a medium of artistic expression; but during the last few years a powerful and important revival has taken place, which the collector must watch with care. Artists, like engineers, take pleasure in experiments, and any one of them would be pleased to discover a new system of artistic engraving. Therefore not a few have turned their attention to the lithographic revival in the hope of achieving new effects, and they have tried their skill at the process, with modified details of their own. As a result, much accomplished work has been done by a number of skilful hands. Whether or no the movement is but a passing wave of experimental enthusiasm time will prove. The question, however, need not harass the collector, for if he believes modern specimens from the stone worth possessing (and he certainly should think so), then let him, at reasonable prices, acquire specimens of the work of Messrs. Short, Whistler, Shannon, Strang, Rothenstein, and the rest of the modern practitioners, as opportunities offer.

'LA RUE TRANSNONIAN'
(From the Lithograph by Honoré Daumier)

CHAPTER VII

COLOUR PRINTS—ENGRAVING FRAUDS

For some years engravings printed in colours have enjoyed an intense popularity which, at the date of writing, shows no signs of abatement; and the very high prices that are sometimes paid for the best examples are, in the opinion of many eminent collectors, altogether disproportionate to their intrinsic value. One unfortunate result of the fashion has been that the market has been flooded with modern reprints, and with fraudulent imitations, produced as a rule with much skill. An old amateur who has been collecting for something like half-a-century recently remarked to the writer that thirty years ago prints in colour were very scarce indeed, while now they appear as plentiful as can be; and he asked: How do you account for it? In many cases a searching examination of the prints now offered for sale would, unfortunately, reveal an unpleasant answer. Of course, there is no denying the fact that engravings printed in colours possess considerable attraction, and are often admirable objects for decorative purposes; but as exponents of a fine art they cannot sustain the exalted position that some desire to claim for them. Prints in colour may be, and many of them doubtless are, brilliant examples of the printer's art, but whether they really enhance the art of the engraver is a question upon which much may be said.

There are some who claim for colour printing a very high position among the fine arts, and in the recently published treatise, which is the only history of colour-printing that has appeared in this country,* the distinguished author makes an eloquent address to her readers in support of this claim. The work is of such value and importance, and will have such an influence upon colour print collectors, that we shall venture to allude to it somewhat fully. Mrs. Frankau, who devoted ten or twelve years to study and research, and to whom collectors must ever be grateful, has taken infinite pains to collect a great mass of invaluable material; and, fortified with an intimate knowledge of her subject, she has traced the history of the art of colour-printing from the days of the early Florentine goldsmiths and their work in niello to the time when the art declined during the second decade of the nineteenth century. In turn, she describes the methods of the chiaroscurists—notably those of Ugo da Carpi—who produced their colour effects by printing from several wood-blocks (a block for each colour), one after another, upon the same piece of paper; then in succession passes under review Hercules Seghers (or Zegers) and Jakob Le Blon, two men of importance in the history of colour-printing, who employed metal plates instead of wood-blocks as the substance from which to print, and afterwards deals with Johannes Teyler, who, Mrs. Frankau declares, 'may justly be acclaimed the inventor of modern colour-printing,' and the unfortunate W. Wynne Ryland, who introduced stipple engraving into England.

But being herself an enthusiastic collector of colour prints, who holds that 'a really fine stipple print in colour, by a good engraver after a well-

* 'Eighteenth Century Colour Prints,' by Mrs. Julia Frankau. London, 1900.

known artist, cannot be paid for too highly,' and that good examples under certain circumstances 'hold their own with oil paintings,' it may be said that her book is a keen appreciation rather than a critical study. Mrs. Frankau deals fully with the technique of the colour printer's art as practised at the end of the eighteenth century—the period of its greatest achievements—but it is to be feared the high position she claims for the art, and the conclusions at which she arrives are, at times, difficult to maintain. She speaks of an extremely intimate alliance having existed between the artist or designer of the subject, the engraver, and the colour-printer; and in emphasising this co-operation states that 'the union of colour made its (stipple-engraving's) strength.' She speaks of 'the interchange of thought between colour-printer and engraver,' and alludes to the 'workers under the united flags.' A partnership suggests a mutual sharing of the work in which each craftsman performs the portion of the task that his particular talents and the means and implements at his disposal best fit him to do. But it would surely be most difficult to find a print in connection with which the engraver has appeared to have said to the printer, 'I have left out depth of tone from this part of the engraving and brightness from that, for you can better obtain the effects needed with your colours.' We venture to assert, on the contrary, that in no stipple or other engraving was a part or a tone omitted because it could be supplied better by means of the printer's coloured inks. Further, every subject turned out by the engraver was intended to be a finished interpretation of the original painting or drawing, done with the primary intention of being printed in monochrome, and so engraved as to render, as nearly as possible in one

colour the tone values, effects, and meaning of the original. We urge that the engraver when engaged upon a plate did not place his lines and dots, or arrange his lights and shadows, with a view to impressions being printed in a number of colours, but from first to last had the monochrome result in view. If the engraver acted thus, then the case for the close partnership between engraver and colour-printer must assuredly break down.

The rules of supply and demand operate in art matters as in commercial affairs, and were in force during the latter half of the eighteenth century as at other times. In the days of Tomkins, Bartolozzi, Burke, Knight, and the rest, when subjects essentially *pretty* were in great demand, supposing a publisher wished to produce a popular print and place it on the market, he would, as a matter of course, one must think, first commission an artist to design a subject that would stand a good chance of meeting with a satisfactory sale. In working out his design, what would be more natural for the artist than that he should execute his subject in water-colour or oil — his usual mediums — rather than in black and white lines or dots (in imitation of the engraver's technique), which would severely tax his patience and skill, and, besides, would serve no useful purpose. The drawing, when completed, would be handed to the engraver to be faithfully translated by means of dots, lines, or mezzotint scraping, and, we repeat, no parts would be left unfinished to be completed by the colour-printer. The plate, on the completion of the engraver's task, would be handed to the printer to be printed in one colour—black, sepia, red, or any other tint. Mrs. Frankau herself agrees to a first edition in monochrome, for she says, 'nineteen out of twenty proofs in

colour that have been shown to me have been impressions taken off, perhaps before lettering, but certainly after a considerable number of earlier proofs have first been pulled.' 'I have not seen a dozen engravings of any importance in colour which I could not match by a stronger impression in monochrome.'

A number of impressions having been printed in monochrome—which in the view of many connoisseurs best sets forth the work of the engraver—the question of printing a series in colours would be considered. The printer would need a coloured copy to work from, and a pattern would be made for him, unless the artist's original drawing was available to be placed before him. The printer would then prepare one or more trial proofs, and the specimen proof considered the most satisfactory would in all probability be marked as such by the person in charge of the work.

We submit that the foregoing reasonably sets forth the probable history of the production of a colour print, and from such circumstances it is scarcely just to build up the assumption of an intimate alliance between the colour printer and the artist; and unless there is documentary evidence to establish this 'twin' association it is surely unsafe to state that the men worked hand-in-hand—the artist making his drawing with the aim and purpose of an impression printed in colour, the engraver acting as middleman to transfer the artist's design in a suitable manner to copper, so that the colour printer might add the chief corner-stone to the achievement. Although Mrs. Frankau says 'the artists have signed proofs as being satisfactory,' she unfortunately gives no definite example in support of the statement, nor does she quote the words of ap probation used by any artist; and though we

have searched and made inquiries, we have not succeeded in discovering either a drawing or a colour print giving in autograph the artist's or the engraver's instructions for colouring, or their signed approval of the printer's result. Undoubtedly, drawings and colour prints from them exist—but this fact by itself proves no alliance between the two men.

Therefore, whilst it *might* be unjust to say this union did not exist between the craftsmen, it is certainly wrong to endeavour to set the colour printer on a throne equal with those of the engraver and artist. When, as occasionally happens, a colour print realises more money than the original drawing from which it was begotten, does it not appear that the artist and the engraver have been dethroned and that a usurper reigns in their stead?

Notwithstanding all that may be said as to the high or low position colour prints should legitimately occupy in the collector's cabinet, there is no doubt that the effects produced in the best and genuine examples possess much charm. And prints in colour having taken an immense hold upon a large section of the collecting public, demand their share of attention here.

In England during the best period of colour-printing—that is, from about 1770 to 1815—it was the universal practice to produce the colour print by means of one copper plate and one operation of printing; and the method of procedure may be described, briefly, as follows:—The printer placed the different coloured inks before him, and then, with dabbers (technically called 'rubbers' and 'stumps'), delicately applied the inks to the different portions of the slightly warmed plate, wiping the surface again, as already explained in

a previous chapter. This inking of the plate required great care and considerable taste, and needed, besides, much patience; and when the operation was completed the printing paper (which had been wetted) was placed upon the plate, and was passed through the press in the usual manner. The reader who has followed the explanation of copper-plate printing already given, will know that in the impression the lines or dots will be in the various colours, while the spaces between them will be white. This feature furnishes one crucial test for deciding whether an impression has been genuinely printed in colours, or is simply an ordinary monochrome impression coloured by hand. In the latter case a magnifying glass will reveal the lines and dots of the subject printed in one uniform colour—usually a deep brown—with over them the strokes of the brush, charged with water-colour, covering the spaces *between* the engraved work as well as the work itself. Even in almost all the best old genuine colour prints slight traces of brush-work can be found, for it was the practice to leave the pupils of eyes and other minute details to be filled in by the print colourer—who was a person distinct from the printer in colour.

The system of colour-printing just described was, as we have said, done with one engraved plate and with one printing; but in the early part of the eighteenth century, Jakob Christoph Le Blon invented and worked a process of colour-printing, first in Holland and France, and afterwards in England, which consisted in printing from three mezzotint plates—one for each of the three primary colours, blue, red, and yellow—upon the same sheet of paper successively. And towards the end of the eighteenth century the

system of engraving several plates—one for each tint—and printing them successively upon one sheet of paper, much in the manner of the modern chromo-lithograph, was largely in vogue in France, and extensively practised by Alix, Vidal, Janinet, and Debucourt. But the colour prints that so much engage the attention of modern amateurs were produced in the manner first described.

It was the frequent custom towards the end of the eighteenth and during the early part of the nineteenth centuries, after a plate had run its course and had been printed from until it was much the worse for wear, to issue a number of impressions in colours, so that the colour might divert attention from the poor condition of the plate. These last expiring efforts of worn-out plates are always in the market, and act as sirens to lure the inexperienced collector.

The question is continually being asked—Will colour prints go out of fashion and lose their fascination for collectors? It is a question that is answered both Yes and No, according to the predilection of the speaker; but it certainly does seem that the prices that are sometimes cheerfully paid are far in excess of the value of such prints when compared with other specimens of the graphic arts. Whether prices will decline remains to be settled by time; if collectors, however, determine to include colour prints in their cabinets, let them only purchase one or two of the very few really fine ones, printed when the plate was in good condition, and even then let them not pay an excessive price.

In consequence of the great demand for prints which has prevailed during recent years, a great number of fraudulent ones—uncoloured as well as coloured—have been 'manufactured' and placed

before the unwary. Consequently, we must consider these spurious engravings, and in doing so will deal briefly with old imitations as well as modern ones.

Ever since the days of Esau and Jacob, deception has been rampant among all peoples; and in all avocations, including that of the engraver. In the early period of the art, before the days of photographic reproduction, copies and imitations of engravings and etchings were laboriously made by hand, and with such microscopic accuracy, that even highly qualified experts are liable occasionally to be thrown off their guard. This system of hand-copying in facsimile was especially practised with the etchings by Rembrandt, and the faithfulness, line for line, and cross-hatch for cross-hatch, was an achievement of great skill. But it will be understood that in making these slavish imitations on the copper, some of the spirit of the original work of the Prince of Etchers was necessarily lost; and this defect can be detected by the highly-trained Rembrandt expert. But it may be asked—How is the average collector to judge whether a reputed Rembrandt etching is genuine or not? In answer, let us say that men have devoted years to the study of the etched work of Rembrandt; and as a connoisseur of paintings by, say, the great Italian Masters, when examining a picture, can discover characteristics and details from which he is able to declare with tolerable accuracy whether the picture is the handiwork of the painter it is reputed to be, yet is unable to explain fully the reasons for his conclusions, or to lay down precise rules whereby an amateur can also arrive at a sound and correct judgment for himself, so the Rembrandt expert by his intimate knowledge of the etcher's work, can instinctively judge the authenticity of a re-

puted Rembrandt etching, yet cannot give definite rules by which an amateur can examine his own print, and pronounce judgment accordingly. One does not judge an old fiddle, or professionally 'taste' wine or tea according to a code of hard and fast rules, and the same must be said to a large extent as to arriving at opinions on the genuineness of old prints. The collector of Rembrandts, until study has brought the necessary qualifications, will do well, therefore, as previously mentioned, to take the catalogues of Middleton and Rovinski as his guides, for therein he will find the known copies of the etchings described, and the precise differences existing between the copies and the originals from which they were imitated, set forth.

The copies by Marcantonio of the engravings by Dürer are well known, and have been described by Bartsch (vol. xiv. p. 401); but Marcantonio did not attempt to follow the German Master line for line in every detail of his work, for being himself an engraver of the first rank, who was the special interpreter of Raphael in copper, he was able to imbue his work with the genius of his own individuality. Wierix's copies of Dürer's engravings are also well known, and can be detected without much difficulty.

In the modern fabrication of old prints, the result is achieved mainly through two channels; and if we consider these two methods of production, we may help the collector to detect spurious engravings when they are offered to him. The first way is for the manufacturer to discover a copper plate that has escaped destruction, and to make it the base for his operations; and the second, is to have a new plate made by one of the modern photographic processes. In

the former case, where the original copper plate has been preserved, it will be understood that the engraved work upon it must necessarily be worn, and that, as it stands, it cannot give off better impressions than the most worn one of the original issue. To print from the plate in this worn condition would be to court failure for the nefarious enterprise, and so the plate must be first worked upon and restored in an endeavour to bring back some of its original richness and vigour, and in order that it may yield impressions which will as closely as possible resemble those of the original printing when the plate was in good condition. But this restoring is an operation requiring great skill, and almost always the print expert can detect where the retouching has been done; for to impart some sort of life to the plate, strong lines or dots must be added, and these glare out from the original work, and disturb the harmony of the picture. Although the collector may, at first, have some difficulty in tracing modern work upon an old plate, if he will carefully study an acknowledged 'faked' print, and compare it with a genuine old one, he will soon discover the places where the dots and lines have been added, and so train his eye. Besides dealing with the subject on the copper plate, the lettering at the foot of it demands attention, and it is not unusual to try to change the lettering back to that of an early state of the original issue. The frequently met reprint of *Sensibility*, by Richard Earlom, after Romney, gives an instance of lettering which has been so treated; and in the modern prints from the old plate it will be found that the 'restored' inscription is very feeble, and has the appearance of a pencil lettering which has been inked over by an unskilful hand.

When the restoring of the plate is finished, the energies of the manufacturer have to be exerted in the matter of printing and paper. And from what has been said as to the difficulty of hiding up the work of the retoucher, it will be easily understood how eager the faker is to try to screen himself behind coloured impressions which give an artificial gloss to the worn-out plates, and divert the eye from the retoucher's efforts.

An impression (paper as well as ink) ripens or mellows in the same way as fruit. If anyone, when turning out an old cabinet, comes across a letter written, say, half-a-century ago, he will notice that the ink has changed its tint, and the paper has softened its tone and become quite different in appearance from the note-paper in current use. This mellowing process takes place in the paper on which engravings have been printed, as well as in that upon which letters have been written; and there is little doubt but that the old stipple and mezzotint prints originally presented some of the same March-wind appearance possessed by modern impressions. Time has undoubtedly laid a kindly touch upon well-preserved prints, as upon old violins, and has added much to their richness and beauty. How one shrinks from reflecting that the poor quality of the paper of to-day will cause Time to destroy rather than enrich, as we find to be the case with the hand-made papers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries!

This richness caused by age presents a serious difficulty to the old-print monger, and he has to exercise his wits to try to overcome it, either by obtaining some genuine old paper, or by 'doctoring' the modern material. If he is so fortunate (or unfortunate) as to procure old paper of the same quality as that upon which the engraving

was originally printed, then he can proceed with his printing, and in that respect be almost able to defy a whole army of experts. To make modern paper appear old, some staining process must be employed; but as a rule the newness of the paper can be detected.

The second system for the manufacture of old prints, that of the photographic processes, is far more difficult to cope with; for the deceptions are sometimes so exceedingly clever, and photography has already reached such perfection, that the greatest experts are liable, occasionally, to fall victims. Should a purchaser be offered what he fears may be a photogravure reproduction, let him, if possible, place the impression by the side of a genuine old one, and carefully compare the sizes of the coppers as shown by the plate-marks of the two impressions. For some reason, it will frequently be found that while the size of the subject of the photogravure has been made to exactly agree with that of the original print, the size of the copper differs from it, and the new plate is often *larger* than the old. Again, the sides of modern copper plates are almost always finished off with a bevel, while those of old ones scarcely ever were; and this fact alone may sometimes be sufficient for the detection of a modern photogravure reproduction. A glance at the photogravure illustrations to a modern book will be sufficient to acquaint the amateur with this bevel. One other thing may safely be said: If the history of a print can be traced back to, say, the year 1868, it may be assumed that the print is not a photographic reproduction, as photogravure was not in common use until after that date.

The question is sometimes asked: What are the principal modern reprinted or reproduced plates? Perhaps the best answer to such a question would

be to say that seeing the extent of the reproductive machinery at the command of the unscrupulous, even were it possible to brand every flagrant example on the market to-day, there could be quantities of unbranded prints on sale a few months hence. The genuine prints which are fashionable to-day are those that the unscrupulous fabricators reproduce in their calling; and instead of preparing imitations of the early masters of engraving, as was done in former times, these men devote their misplaced talents to the manufacture of spurious specimens of mezzotint and stipple engraving. One unfortunate feature of modern reproductive work is that frequently old prints are photographically reproduced for the perfectly honest purposes of illustration and of affording help to students, and are stamped as 'facsimile reproductions'; but the prints are bought by dishonest dealers, the stamps are erased, and then they are put into antique frames and passed off as old prints. The reproductions of Dürer and other Great Masters made by Messrs Armand-Durand of Paris are wonderful specimens of modern photographic work, and though made without the slightest intention of imposing on the public, they are so perfect that they could be turned to bad account by an unscrupulous dealer. Another specimen of modern work honestly done, but unscrupulously exploited, is Dickinson's mezzotint of *Jane, Duchess of Gordon*, one of the many prints reproduced in facsimile by the Imperial Press at Berlin. It is so good that it might, at first sight, deceive an expert. A copy has been seen in which the publication line had been folded back, as though the print had come out of an old frame, and even the top and side margins had been cut off to give the appearance of former bad treatment.

CHAPTER VIII

COLLECTORS' METHODS

HAVING briefly passed in review all the leading styles of engraving, a few words as to collectors' methods may be helpful. For a number of years the writer was associated with a collector, the range of whose acquisitions extended from buttons to fire-backs, who adopted the system of keeping a kind of day-book in which was entered every purchase, with its date, price, name and address of seller, and other details; and to each item was assigned a number. This system, though elaborate, was of great practical value, and it was surprising how frequently a reference to the book was required. On the other hand, an equally eminent collector, who recently passed away, once remarked to the writer that such a book would have made him shudder, for it would have recalled to him the high prices he had sometimes paid for objects of little value. He added, no one can expect invariably to steer clear of pitfalls.

Felix Slade, the founder of the fine art professorships at Oxford and Cambridge, and at University College, London, made quality of impression the first article of his collecting creed, and nothing less than the best possible would satisfy him. Therefore, should prints from his famous cabinet be seen, they will almost certainly be found to be of the greatest excellence. The late Chaloner

Smith, whose important work on mezzotint portraits has an assured position in the literature of art, is said to have been attracted to mezzotints by seeing an impression one day in the shop of Evans the printseller; and at first he put his maximum price for a print at sixpence. In whatever way the amateur may set about forming his cabinet, and whatever aims he may have in view, the method of keeping a day-book and carefully noting the purchases as they are made, has much to commend it, and the book will be found of increasing interest and importance the longer it is kept.

There have been collectors like Sir Wollaston Franks, whose sole aim was to enrich some public institution; and like Sir John Soane, who, having formed his collections, suitably housed them and passed them on for public enjoyment, adequately endowed. And there have been those like M. Edmond de Goncourt, who in his will said: 'Ma volonté est que mes dessins, mes estampes, mes bibelots, mes livres, enfin les choses d'art qui ont fait le bonheur de ma vie, n'aient pas la froide tombe d'un musée, et le regard bête du passant indifférent, et je demande qu'elles soient toutes éparpillées sous les coups de marteau du commissaire-priseur et que la jouissance que m'a procurée l'acquisition de chacune d'elles, soit redonnée, pour chacune d'elles, à un heritier de mes goûts.'

We have in a previous chapter alluded to the restoration of prints. The collector will need to know a reliable restorer to whom he can entrust his treasures to be cleaned and repaired, and *care must be taken that the work done to the prints is not carried too far.* The word reliable is used advisedly, for a restorer who is not an expert and thoroughly conversant with his trade may

work much mischief that may not disclose itself until several years after the print has been restored. Then for the safety of the collection it will be well to have the prints mounted upon cardboards of one or more regular sizes, and they should not be fastened down to the boards, but only attached to them on one side with a paper hinge, so that the backs of the prints may be examined when necessary. It is also a good plan, where a print is of great value, to hinge a second sheet of card (having an opening cut through it a trifle smaller than the size of the print) to the one upon which the engraving has been attached, so as to save the surface of the print from lateral friction.

If the amateur wishes to get the most enjoyment from his possessions, he may do so by having a number of frames made, with movable backs, of sizes to range with his mounted prints, and then by simply from time to time changing the prints they contain, he can without any trouble alter the appearance of a room, for a series of etchings may give place to a set of Dürer engravings, or a batch of mezzotints may be exchanged for a group of stipple prints.

A mistake sometimes made by amateurs is when, after visiting a public collection and seeing the strong methods employed there for the preservation of the prints, they go home and imitate the style for their own use. It should always be remembered that the needs for strength in a public collection, where the prints are being constantly handled by students, do not apply in a private cabinet where the owner usually handles (or, shall we say, *should* handle) the prints himself while showing his treasures to his friends. Therefore, while every precaution ought to be taken

to suitably preserve his collection, the amateur will not need to imitate the mounting and placing methods which prevail in a public institution. By bearing this fact in mind he will be spared space for storage, unnecessary weight, and expense. For private use, and where the wear and tear is small, it is by no means a bad plan to back modern prints, which usually are on a rough paper, with tissue, for then when the prints are placed in a pile one on another the tissue softens the pressure, and reduces the risk of injury. The late Henry Vaughan did not devote attention to the mounting of his prints, but took the great precaution of preserving his most valuable treasures in strong iron boxes.

All amateurs are so familiar with what are known as 'sunk mounts,' that they may never have thought there was a time when sunk mounts were unknown, or ever wanted inventing. It will therefore interest many to learn how the first sunk mount came into existence. Some forty years ago, when the Print Department of the British Museum was still quite small, the drawings were kept loosely in a couple of portfolios. There they were subject to rubbing each time the portfolios were handed to students; and though it was felt that injury was constantly being done, a way to obviate the wear and tear could not for a long time be devised. At last one of the officials, Mr. W. M. Scott, thought he could overcome the evil by placing each drawing on a cardboard mount, so made that the surface of the drawing would be below that of the surrounding card. This result he obtained by pasting a sheet of cardboard, in which an opening had been cut, upon a second and uncut sheet of cardboard. The drawing was then mounted in the cut opening, and, being thus

below the surface of the surrounding card, escaped all wear and tear. In this way the first sunk mount was made or 'invented,' and it was at once found to be in every way successful. The system has now come into universal use wherever prints and drawings are mounted, and the cutting of mounts has become a special trade employing a great number of hands.

A word must be added to indicate the aim and work of the Printsellers' Association, which was founded in 1847. The Association was formed in the common interests of the publishers of modern engravings, and of the public, to prevent the printing-off of impressions, beyond a definitely declared number, in each of the states—'artists' proofs,' 'before letter proofs,' 'prints,' etc. To accomplish this end, the publishers identified with the Association (and at the present time all the leading publishers are among its supporters) make a written declaration of the number of impressions that have been printed, and these impressions are submitted to the Association to be impressed with a stamp bearing its name, and two or three letters of reference to entries in its books. It will thus be seen that purchasers of modern prints bearing the Printsellers' Association stamp are guaranteed against imposition, and printsellers are protected against unfair trading.

CHAPTER IX

THE MONEY VALUE OF PRINTS

The references (B.) are to 'Le Peintre-Graveur,' by Adam Bartsch.

In view of the sensational prices that are occasionally realised in the sale-rooms—prices which set collectors and the world of newspaper readers talking—it is not without hesitation that one approaches the task of venturing to offer advice to the amateur as to the amounts he should expect to pay for the specimens of the engraver's art he might wish to acquire. When in the same sale (that of Sir Seymour Haden, in June 1891) a first state of the *Portrait of Rembrandt leaning on a Stone Sill* (see p. 18) went for but £25, while an impression in the second realised £91, the reader will understand how difficult it is to give advice that shall be of service. In this particular case there was doubtless some question of the condition of the impressions that caused the unusual result. There being so much white space at the upper part of the subject, some of this top portion was frequently cut off, and sometimes the sides were clipped also. It is therefore probable that the second state was in fine condition and perfect, while the first was incomplete. These circumstances alone would be sufficient to cause the reversal of the usual order of prices. After all, to be able to form a reliable judgment, the collector must gain his information as he goes along; and one of the best ways in

PORTRAIT OF PIETRO ARETINO

(SOLD FOR £780, DECEMBER 1873)

(*From the Line Engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi*)

which he can build up his knowledge is by frequenting the auction rooms, looking through the portfolios when the prints are on view, carefully noting the qualities of the impressions offered, and watching the bidding and the prices realised. Let us once again enforce the fact that the difference in the market-value of a rich first-rate impression and a poor, flat, dull one may be immense; for while the former may be worth a hundred pounds, the latter may be dear at a few shillings. By becoming conversant with the technical details of engraving as already recommended, the amateur will learn much that will help him to form a true judgment of the intrinsic merits of prints, and the knowledge he will gain will give him a great advantage in the prosecution of his hobby from the money-value point of view.

Fashion with its caprices presents a formidable obstacle to the formation of a definite estimate of the money-value of prints, for by its decrees one class of engravings loses its charm for the collecting public, while another—formerly neglected—comes forward into popularity. Not many years ago the engravings of the more severe school of Line were appraised highly, while etchings, and engravings printed in colour, were passed over. At the present day the work of the English line engravers—Woollett, Strange, and others of their school—are almost forgotten, while etchings by many of the chief masters, and engravings printed in colours, sell for large sums—in the latter case, as many connoisseurs believe, at altogether inordinate prices.

Now that the fashion is dead set in favour of stipple engravings printed in colours, let the collector take advantage of his opportunity and form a cabinet of, say, French line engravings of the best period, or Dutch etchings, so as to be on

the right side should the tide turn. Just now the prices of French line engravings, with certain exceptions of early fine states, are almost stationary; but those of Dutch etchings of good quality and early state are all advancing.

So in our effort to guide the collector in the prices he should give for his treasures, it must be understood that the amounts named are subject to the fluctuations of the print market, the vagaries of fashion, and the caprices of the saleroom.

While there is a risk that the high prices obtained for some prints at the present day may stagger the beginner, let us remember that the few very rich connoisseurs, and institutions with a wealthy backing, that give unlimited commissions for the purchase of the greatest rarities, acquire only a small percentage of the total number of prints which change ownership; and we can assure the amateur that it is undoubtedly true that many genuine old prints in fine condition are to be found by seeking, at prices to suit a moderate purse. If the collector's desire is to secure states and impressions that are almost unique, then of course there may be no limit to the amount he will be called upon to pay, as it will simply be a battle of purses; but if his aim is to acquire objects of beauty for their own sake, then his purchases need not lead him into very great expense, for a second, or even a third, state may represent the plate richer in quality than a first (and sometimes the difference in actual work between two states is very slight), especially if only a few impressions of the first were printed off. For it must be remembered that it is only after several impressions have been printed that the plate gets into thorough working order. The attempt to seek for first, and only first, states would be absurd. Still a fairly large number of even

ADAM AND EVE

(SOLD FOR £410, MAY 1892)

(*From the Line Engraving by Albrecht Dürer*, 1504)

Rembrandt first states may be obtained at not out-of-the-way prices. We know one amateur who, fortified by his knowledge of prints, visits second-hand book shops, old furniture shops, and the like, and by looking through the portfolios of prints frequently to be found in such places, has secured a number of genuine Callot etchings at twopence apiece, Della Bella etchings at the same price, and genuine Rembrandt etchings at sixpence. Some of the prints, naturally, are poor in quality and late in state; but others have been quite good, and altogether the result is surprising. This is real collecting, which affords more enjoyment in the pursuit than the mere giving of a commission to a dealer to attend a sale; and the amateur we have in mind has already acquired a number of desirable specimens, while at the time of writing his greatest outlay on a single print has been but four-and-sixpence. We also know a gifted collector possessing a thorough expert knowledge who, during the last few seasons, has brought together the nucleus of a fine collection of mezzotints at quite moderate prices. Though there are not to be found among his prints specimens of the portraits of ladies after the Reynolds and Romney school, some of which are fetching such enormous (but not extravagant) prices, still there are portraits and subject-pieces that display the best talents of the chief masters of mezzotint, and the quality of the impressions in many cases is choice. The prices paid rarely exceeded three pounds apiece, and frequently they were less.

In arriving at the prices that will follow, we have been influenced by the market of the last three or four years, in England and on the Continent; though for the etchings of the schools of the seventeenth century we have frequently referred to

the sale, in June 1891, of the important cabinet formed by Sir Seymour Haden, who, himself a distinguished etcher, brought together an assemblage of prints in early states and of exceptionally fine quality. And for engravings and etchings by the old masters generally, we have referred to the sale in May 1892, of the still more famous collection formed by the late Richard Fisher, whose published works on the art of the early engravers have an European reputation, and whose cabinet contained some very choice specimens. But we must bear in mind that in consequence of the reputation Fisher had achieved, and of the well-known excellence of his cabinet, the sale drew together a large number of English amateurs and Continental buyers, and the keenness of the bidding forced the prices up to unusually high amounts in some cases. The Fisher average of prices has, however, been exceeded at several Continental sales during the last few years, notably at the dispersal of the Dr. August Straeter collection at Stuttgart in May 1898, and of the Cornill d'Orville collection at the same place in May 1900.

It may be best to divide the wide field of engraving into groups; and beginning with the early ITALIAN SCHOOL, let us say that as the specimens known are limited in number, and as a large proportion of them are preserved in public museums in England and on the Continent, there is always a severe competition for the possession of them on the rare occasions when genuine examples come up for sale. It is the rule with these early engravings by the Great Masters that the prices are governed, first, by the rarity of the specimens offered. At an important sale at Stuttgart, in May 1899, the prices ran high, and £450 was paid for a Maso Finiguerra print of the *Crucifixion*. At the

REMBRANDT WITH THE SABRE

(SOLD FOR £2000, JULY 1893)

(*From the Etching by Rembrandt*, 1634)

Angiolini sale at Stuttgart, in May 1895, very high prices were attained, an *Almanach* by an anonymous fifteenth-century engraver realising £240, and *David slaying Goliath* (Passavant 94), by Baccio Baldini, fetching £480. On another occasion *The Assumption of the Virgin*, on two sheets, attributed to Sandro Botticelli (Passavant 100), sold for £860. Coming some years later in the history of engraving we have by Domenico Campagnola, a *Musical Party*, £60, a *Landscape with a Village*, £145, and a *Dance of Twelve Cupids*, £50; by Giulio Campagnola, *John the Baptist*, £32, and *Ganymede*, £52, 10s.; by Andrea Mantegna, *The Flagellation*, £255, *The Entombment*, £41, and *The Fight of Sea Gods*, £145. A sheet of *Playing Cards* by the 'Master of the Banderole' has brought £100. The prices a collector will be asked for Early Italian engravings may exceed or be less than those named, for so much depends upon rarity and quality.

But as the prints of this group chiefly occupy the attention of the expert, and are to a large extent of antiquarian interest, and as they do not as a rule come within the scope of the average collector, we will pass to the work of the better-known Italian engraver Marcantonio Raimondi. At the present day the prices of Marcantonio show a marked tendency to decline, and desirable specimens may be procured at more reasonable figures than formerly; but he is an artist greatly esteemed, and choice early states of a certain few plates must be paid for. An important reason for the decline of his prints in the estimation of the collecting public is to be found in the fact that Marcantonio's work is almost all interpretative, as we have already noticed, and the tendency of the present age is strongly in favour of originality. In April 1898 about 220 prints sold for £107, 18s., the highest

amount for a single print being £10, 10s., for *St. Cecilia* after Raphael (B. 116). A few days later the prices were: *Adam and Eve* (B. 1), £15, 15s.; *Madonna lamenting over the Dead Body of Christ* (B. 34), £21; *St. Paul preaching at Athens* (B. 44), £18; *Virgin under the Palm Tree* (B. 62), £20, 10s.; *The Five Saints* (B. 113), £23; and *Lucretia* (B. 192), £21. Previously the *Adam and Eve* (B. 1), early state, brought £180; a *Massacre of the Innocents* (B. 20), early state, £190; and a *Madonna seated on the Clouds, with the Infant Saviour in her Arms* (B. 52), £185. Richard Fisher's collection of Marcantonio was a very full one; and the 122 lots brought in the sum of £1351, 16s. 6d., the prices ranging from 5s. for *The Three Holy Women* (B. 33), to £170 for *Lucretia*, first state (B. 192). Other high prices were *St. Paul preaching at Athens* (B. 44), £46; *The Virgin suckling the Child* (B. 61), £100; *The Virgin under a Palm Tree* (B. 62), £80; *The Holy Family, with a Cradle* (B. 63), £44; and *The Climbers*—three figures from Michelangelo's cartoon of *The Battle of Pisa*—(B. 487), £51. Sir Seymour Haden had only an impression of *The Massacre of the Innocents* (B. 20), and it went for £20. The Brentano Birckenstock cabinet contained an unusually complete and choice collection of Marcantonio, and at its dispersal in 1870 extraordinary prices were realised. Among the chief items were *St. Cecilia* (B. 116), £125; *Bacchanal* (B. 248), £560; *The Climbers* (B. 487), £340; and *The Three Singers* (B. 468), £320. Such prices will probably never be approached again. The record price for a Marcantonio print was reached at the Hugh Howard sale as far back as December 1873, when the portrait of *Pietro Aretino* (B. 513), the Italian poet, brought the large sum of £780

PORTRAIT OF EPHRAIM BONUS

(SOLD FOR £1950, JULY 1893)

(*From the Etching by Rembrandt*, 1647)

(see p. 108). It was one of only two impressions known in the first state, before the addition of some strokes to the cap, and before four extra lines of inscription were added. At the Brentano Birckenstock sale a second state was sold for £440.

Among later Italian artists we will only name Stefano della Bella and Raphael Morghen, but we may say in passing that much work by the Italian engravers of the period of the Carraccis and by the still more modern men is to be obtained at a reasonable cost. Prints by the Carraccis themselves are very cheap. The market value of prints by the hand of Della Bella is, at present, low, and sets of his landscape and shipping subjects change hands at a few shillings apiece, while fine specimens are knocked down in the salerooms for less than a sovereign. Among those above this latter figure, a fine first state of *St. Prospero descending from Heaven* has sold for £2, 12s. 6d.; and an undescribed state of an altar-piece, for £2, 15s. Coming down to Raphael Morghen, who produced a great quantity of work towards the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, we note that the prices of his prints vary considerably. A brilliant 'remarque' impression of his best known engraving, *The Last Supper*, after Da Vinci, with white plate on table, realised £325 at the Schloeser sale in 1880, and £346, 10s. at the S. Mendel sale. At the present time a second state with one line of inscription and before 'Amen dico vobis' may cost about £70, an impression with the line commencing with these words, £15, and the latest lettered state may be had for a five pound note. A fine impression of *The Aurora*, after Guido Reni, maintains a price at from £70 to £100; and £70 has been paid for a before-letters state of *The Transfiguration*, after Raphael,

though it would not fetch so much at the present day. But impressions with letters of most of his plates are to be obtained at prices from ten shillings to seven or eight pounds. We may here mention C. F. Müller's *Madonna di San Sisto*, after Raphael, a brilliant impression of which has sold for as much as £110. These three engravings: *The Last Supper*, *The Aurora*, and *The Madonna di San Sisto*, are striking exceptions to the general rule of depression in the value of modern line engravings.

DÜRER, SCHONGAUER, LUCAS VAN LEYDEN, ISRAHEL VAN MECKENEM.—The engravings by Albrecht Dürer have never lost their charm for collectors, and to-day impressions in the finest condition always sell for large sums. The prices of Dürer and Rembrandt prints have never declined, though sometimes they have come to a standstill. At the Fisher sale seventy-seven prints by Dürer were offered, and they realised no less than £1364, 2s. 6d. Two prints went for eight shillings apiece, but among the highest were *The Arms with the Cock*, early impression, £20; *The Arms with the Skull*, £42; *The Great Fortune*, £23; *The Knight and Lady walking*, £29; *The Melancholia*, £39; *St. Hubert*, £48 (it has since fetched £150); *The Nativity*, £49, though at another sale it has fetched £76 (see p. 10); *The Knight and Death*, £100 (a very fine impression has changed hands at £145); and the *Adam and Eve* was sold for £410 (see p. 110). At the Seymour Haden sale, the *Adam and Eve* realised £100; *The Melancholia*, £48; *The Great Fortune*, £21; *The Knight and Death*, £71; and *The Arms with the Skull*, £51. At the Cornill d'Orville sale, already alluded to, the Dürers were extraordinarily complete and choice, though some impressions were clipped; and the series realised about £7000. At this sale Dürer's

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK

(SOLD FOR £1750, JULY 1893)

(*From the Etching by Rembrandt*, 1649-50)

dry-point etching *St. Jerome* (B. 59) realised the record price of £630, and *The Arms with the Cock*, £160. At the Straeter sale *The Arms with the Skull* (very choice impression) fetched £120, and *The Nativity* was secured by Messrs. Colnaghi at £130 (see p. 10). The woodcuts to which the name of Dürer is attached, though not so expensive as the metal engravings, yet command fair average prices for good impressions in early editions, though it is very difficult to give an average cost, as the prices vary immensely. At the Cornill d'Orville sale £175 was paid for the set of twelve proofs of *The Large Passion*, and £320 for the sixteen impressions of *The Apocalypse* series, though not in first-class condition. Single proofs of *The Apocalypse* fetch about £20. *The Virgin and Child* (B. 98), one of the rarest of Dürer's woodcuts, good impression, sold for almost £100. Other prices are *Life of the Virgin*, twenty proofs, £150, and *The Pillar* (B. 129), four cuts, £140. At the Angiolini sale the set of ninety-two prints of *The Triumphal Arch of Maximilian* realised £105.

Martin Schongauer is, averagely, one of the highest-priced masters for really fine impressions, and it is doubtful whether a collector would be able to bring together impressions of even half the plates he engraved, while some of them could not be found at all. Most of his prints have gone up in value since 1875, and at that date, at the Frederic Kalle sale, *The Death of the Virgin* realised £420 (see p. 40); *The Nativity*, £180; *The Adoration of the Magi* (B. 6), £200; and *The Crowning of the Virgin*, about £150. Separate impressions of the *Small Passion* fetch from £20 to £25 each. Among other prices that have been paid for his prints are: *St. Anthony, the Hermit, standing*, £114, 5s.; *St. Anthony tormented by Demons*, £45;

The Crucifixion, £90; *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen in the Garden*, £38; and *The Virgin on a Throne, by the side of God the Father*, £41.

Again, fine impressions of Lucas van Leyden's engravings always sell well, and though commonplace specimens may be had cheaply, the best have a firm hold on the market. The most expensive have been: *Abraham dismissing Hagar* (large plate) (B. 17), £720; *L'Espiègle* (B. 159), a private sale mentioned by Dutuit, £200; and *Lot and his Daughters*, £161; while £94 has been the price of *The Repose in Egypt*; £85 of *The Magdalen giving herself up to the Pleasures of the World* (B. 122); £56 of *The Adoration of the Magi*; £69 of *The Virgin and Child in a Landscape*; and £80 (Liphart sale in 1876) of *David playing the Harp* (B. 27). In the Fisher sale half the lots went for less than two pounds a lot.

The highest price ever paid for an Israhel van Meckenem was £730; and it was the price at the Angiolini sale in May 1895 of *The Great Bishop's Staff* (B. appendix, 139), on two sheets. Other prices at this sale were *Guitar Player* (B. 178), £65; *Organ Player* (B. 175), £72; and *The Stoning of St. Stephen* (B. 94), £80. *The Apotheosis of the Virgin* realised £41 in the Fisher sale, the *Guitar Player and a Lady Singing*, £19, 10s., and *The Virgin and Child and Four Angels*, £19. One of his decorative panels of ornamental foliage has been mentioned as selling for £71.

A few of the great early masters of engraving we have spoken of individually, for their importance required personal treatment; but to continue in the same way would be wearisome, so we must deal more with groups. And first will naturally come the LITTLE MASTERS, whose work has made such a special mark in the history of engraving.

MARY ISABELLA, DUCHESS OF RUTLAND

(SOLD FOR 1000 GUINEAS, MARCH 1901)

(*From the Mezzotint by Valentine Green after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1780)

When selecting specimens for purchase, it must be remembered that, on account of the fine character of the work, the plates soon showed signs of wear in the printing, and the collector will need to be on the alert to secure early impressions, if possible, before any retouching. Retouched impressions by these masters are frequently to be procured at reasonable prices, but good early ones average £2, £3, or even £5 each, while rarities fetch from £20 to £25. In December 1898 Mr. W. J. Loftie—the Little Master specialist—bought sixteen specimens at public auction for £5, 7s. 6d., and in the same sale ten H. S. Beham prints went for £4, 10s. At the Fisher sale, an Aldegrever print was sold for £7, 10s., an Altdorfer for £2, 8s., a Barthel Beham for £4, an H. S. Beham (the *Madonna with the Sleeping Child*) for £17, 10s., a J. Binck for £3, a Brosamer for 13s., and a G. Pencz for £5. Altdorfer and Barthel Beham are the two most important of the Little Master group, but the amateur will not succeed in making a complete collection of prints by either artist. Some prices of Altdorfer at a Stuttgart sale in April 1894 were: *Pride*, £17, 10s.; *Woman holding a Candelabrum*, £21; *Little Cupid*, £21; and *Faith*, £24. Brosamer's *Christ on the Cross* has recently been sold for £96.

THE DUTCH ETCHINGS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, if we except those by Rembrandt, Vandyck (in the first states), Ostade, and Ruysdael, do not possess a very high money value at the present day. Occasionally high prices are obtained for fine impressions of etchings in early states by Potter and Berchem, but those by Karel du Jardin, Everdingen, and the other artists of the school, do not make great demands upon the collector's purse, except for pieces of great rarity. The first

state Vandyck etchings at the Seymour Haden sale realised £60, £44, £30, £50, and £17, 10s. respectively; in the Fisher sale twelve of the Ostades sold for £18 and upwards, and Ruysdael prices at different sales have been £16, £33, £38, and £86. At the Straeter sale, two etchings by Nicolaes Berchem, in second state, fetched £46 and £70, and Potter's *Head of a Cow* (B. 16) realised £38.

When we come to Rembrandt, how difficult is the task of setting values! The earliest states of Rembrandt's etchings represent the best condition of the plates, and therefore fetch the highest prices. We will begin by giving illustrations of three etchings which hold the record prices up to the present time, though the prices offer little guide to the collector. These three etchings were included in the famous Holford collection that was dispersed in July 1893, and together they realised the sensational figure of £5700! The amount given for the portrait of *Rembrandt with the Sabre* (see p. 112) was £2000, the highest sum ever paid for a print. Only four impressions are known of this etching in the first state, and after they were printed the metal plate was cut down to an irregular oval, in which condition impressions are not so rare. As three of these first state impressions are preserved in national collections, this fourth, from the Holford cabinet, was the only one that could possibly be sold. Hence, to a large extent, the reason for the exceptionally high price. The amount paid for the beautiful *Portrait of Ephraim Bonus* (see p. 114) fell only £50 short of that given for the *Rembrandt with the Sabre.* In this first state it will be noticed that the Jewish physician is wearing a black ring on his finger; and with the black ring only three impressions are known,

EMILY, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY

(SOLD FOR 450 GUINEAS, MARCH 1901)

(*From the Mezzotint by Valentine Green after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1781)

all the remaining (and later) prints having a white one. As of these three impressions in the first state one is permanently preserved at Amsterdam, while the second is in the British Museum, the Holford impression, as in the case of the *Rembrandt with the Sabre*, was the only one that could possibly ever come into the market. The bidding was extremely keen, and eventually Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris secured the prize for £1950. At the same sale an impression in the second state—that is, with the white ring—went for only £135. The third Rembrandt etching — *Christ healing the Sick* (see p. 116)—is probably the most popular of all, and it realised the third highest price ever paid for a print, £1750. It was one of eight known first state impressions (the difference between the first and second states is chiefly the addition of some lines to the shoulders of the ass on the right), and as several of them are safely housed in museums in London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Vienna, the same reason prevailed for keen competition.

But genuine Rembrandt etchings are at times to be bought at quite reasonable prices—say three or four pounds — by the collector who has an intimate knowledge of his subject. The groups least dear seem to be generally the beggars, studies of figures, and Bible subjects. The landscapes and portraits are usually among the most expensive and much the most sought after. The student of Rembrandt always looks back to the great Holford sale as the record-breaking epoch, and in the case of some of the prints it would seem that a long time must elapse before such dizzy heights can be reached again. But Rembrandt prices for the finest impressions always rank very high indeed. Among portraits, we have *Jan Sylvius*, £450;

Jan Lutma, first state, £262; the large *Coppenol* portrait, £1359; and *The Great Jewish Bride*, £180. Among landscapes—*The Three Trees*, £230 (see p. 4); *Landscape with a Ruined Tower*, £182; *View of Omval*, £320; *The Coach Landscape*, £145; and *The Arched Landscape*, £245. And among Bible subjects, besides the *Christ healing the Sick*, there are the *Christ before Pilate*, £1250; and *The Raising of Lazarus*, £125. In order that these very high prices may not discourage the collector with moderate means, let us hasten to say that out of the seventy-six lots that were included in the Fisher sale, no less than fifty-two were sold for £8 or less, while in five instances the price did not exceed a guinea; and that of the 144 lots that comprised the Rembrandt collection of so eminent an expert as Sir Seymour Haden, seventy did not reach a price above eight pounds.

Dutch Engravers.—It may be taken as a general rule that the work of the Dutch engravers of the seventeenth century may be procured on reasonable terms, and that good average prints can be purchased at from £1 to £3. Only in cases of rare states or brilliant impressions do the prices rise much above the latter figure. Among the prices recorded for these special prints are: by Scheltius à Bolswert, *The Crucifixion*, after Vandyck, rare early state, £22; by Jacobus Houbraken, *Portrait of John Dryden*, £5, 12s. 6d.; by Pieter de Jode, *Portrait of Henrietta Maria*, after Vandyck, £9, 9s.; by Cornelis Visscher, *The Rat-Catcher*, £10, 10s.; and by Lucas Vorsterman, a *Portrait of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel*, £17, 10s.

Early Engraving in England.—When we come to consider the money value of the early work engraved in this country, we find that though

LADY BETTY DELMÉ AND CHILDREN

(SOLD FOR 920 GUINEAS, MARCH 1901)

(*From the Mezzotint by Valentine Green after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1779)

prints of mediocre quality and late state are to be picked up at small cost, yet fine impressions in early and rare states—and some are exceedingly rare and important—excite keen competition whenever they come into the market, and sell accordingly. In this early English group are included several continental craftsmen who came over to England and made London their adopted home. The most important of the few engravings by Thomas Cockson is an equestrian portrait of *George, Earl of Cumberland,* and eleven guineas has been the price recorded for it. Francis Delaram's engravings are more numerous, and his very rare equestrian portrait of *James I., with View of London in the Background,* together with its *pendant, Anne of Denmark, with View of Windsor in Background,* engraved by Simon van de Passe, changed hands in December 1899 at £91 the pair. R. Elstracke's rarest and finest prints have reached very high prices, several getting well towards three figures; and his print of *Mary, Queen of Scots, and Lord Darnley* standing side by side, once sold for £150. The engravings by Faithorne, our earliest native engraver, always have a good market, and a high average price. In November 1898 his curious emblematical *Portrait of Cromwell* between two pillars cost £71, while others have been sold at from £15 to £40. Much the same, though perhaps on a slightly modified scale, has to be said of Rogers, Payne, Vaughan, the family of Passe, Marshall, and W. Hole. At the Seymour Haden sale 130 lots by Hollar were put up for auction, and fetched from 3s. to £67, the latter price being for the set of 34 prints of *Sea Shells.* The average price was not excessive, the set of *The Seasons* (4) going for £17; the first state of *The Royal Exchange,* for £16; and the *Portrait of*

James II. as Duke of York, for £21. Other Hollar prices for portraits have been: *Thomas à Becket*, £32; *Countess of Arundel*, £24, 10s.; and *James II. as Duke of York*, £27, 10s.

LATER ENGLISH LINE ENGRAVERS.—The prints by the later English practitioners in line are not in great demand just now, and good specimens by Woollett, Sharp, Sir R. Strange, Vertue, and others, may be had at very reasonable cost; and even Hogarth suffers with the rest. There seems, however, an indication that engravings of this school will appreciate in value. *The Canterbury Pilgrims* by Blake may be put at about a five-pound note, and the less vigorous one after Stothard at about the same figure. The fine line engravings after J. M. W. Turner sell at such prices as: *Oberwesel* by J. T. Willmore, £12, 12s.; *Modern Italy* by W. Miller, £7, 7s.; *St. Mark's, Venice*, by G. Hollis, £14, 14s.; *Mercury and Argus* by J. T. Willmore, £12, 12s.; *Tivoli*, by E. Goodall, £17, 6s. Good engravings after Sir Edwin Landseer are increasing in value, and recently as much as £85 was paid for *The Monarch of the Glen*, by Thomas Landseer; and £173, 5s. for *Hunters at Grass*, by C. G. Lewis.

FRENCH LINE ENGRAVERS.—Turning now to the French line engravers, it must be said that the exquisite graver work by the best of these highly-trained craftsmen maintains a high average price, which is advancing, though good impressions by Nanteuil, Wille, Bosse, and a few others can sometimes be had cheaply. Drevet's *Portrait of Adrienne Lecouvreur* went as high as £39, in February 1899. Edelinck's work has been recorded still higher, though the average is not above four or five pounds, and Gaultier and Thomas De Leu are about on the same level. A fine print of Masson's *Portrait of Guillaume de Brisacier* (see

THE LADIES WALDEGRAVE

(SOLD FOR £588 IN 1897)

(From the Mezzotint by Valentine Green after Sir J. Reynolds, 1781)

p. 46) in the first state was bought by Messrs. Colnaghi for £38 at the Holford sale; but on a more recent occasion it realised £100.

SOME ETCHERS.—Claude Gelée's etchings are to be had at varying prices, the range at the Haden sale being from 11s. to £42, the latter price being paid for a beautiful impression of *Le Bouvier*; and at the Fisher sale from 9s. to £15, the higher figure being again for an impression of *Le Bouvier*. Of his others, the *Peasants dancing under the Trees*, £10; and *A Shepherd and Shepherdess conversing*, £7. Etchings by Claude Mellan and by Callot may be bought cheaply. Whistler and Méryon etchings have advanced very much in value during the last few years. Whistler's now rank among the most expensive of modern etchings, and one important reason for this is to be found in the fact that Whistler being American born, the collectors of the United States are eagerly trying to complete their sets of his works. Fine impressions of Méryon's etchings on green paper fetch about twice as much as those on ordinary paper. In June 1898 a number of etchings by Méryon changed hands at very cheap prices, and in February of the same year £3 was paid for *La Pompe Notre Dame* (now worth about £15 on ordinary and £25 on green paper); and £3, 18s. each for *La Tour de l'Horloge* (now worth about £12 on ordinary paper), and *Le Petit Pont* (of which an impression on green paper has recently been sold at a Paris sale for £30). Prices for his etchings seem to hover between £5 and £10, though £125 was once given for a first state of *L'Abside de Notre-Dame de Paris* (see p. 6), and £50 for a second state with the date. Though the etchings by Whistler are advancing so rapidly in value, at a sale in June 1898 the

price did not exceed £2, 12s., and six months later the average was about the same. In February of that year *The Pool* sold at £3, 12s., and *The Forge* at £7, though a very fine impression of this latter would now be worth £25. In May 1899 a first state of *Westminster Bridge* sold at £3, 3s. (now worth much more), and a signed 'second proof' of the *Long Lagoon* from the Venice set at £7, 5s. (now worth £15); while in the following month *The Kitchen* changed hands at £10, 10s., and a beautiful proof of the extremely rare dry-point etching *The Engraver*, realised £72.

MEZZOTINTS.—In regard to the general average of mezzotint prices, it may be taken as a rule that good early specimens of the art, both before it reached England and for some few years after the Restoration of Charles II., are paid for rather highly. The *Great Executioner*, by Prince Rupert, once attained the high figure of £300, and £40 has been reached more than once. The work done during the reigns from Anne to George II. sells for less, though John Smith, Isaac Beckett, John Simon, and some others obtain good prices at times, and a first state of *Peg Woffington as Mrs. Ford*, by John Faber, jun., realised £71 at the Wilson sale in April 1898. Richard Earlom's prints do not go at great prices, though 46 guineas have recently been paid for a choice pair of his *Fruit* and *Flower Pieces*, after Van Huysum, before the motto in the coat of arms. The price of his *Royal Academy Exhibition*, 1771, is between £5 and £6, and the set of the *Marriage à la Mode* may be put at from £10 to £15. From the days of MacArdell to about the year 1810 the mezzotinters produced their finest work; and the newspapers announce from time to time the tre-

THE DAUGHTERS OF SIR THOMAS FRANKLAND

(SOLD FOR £399 IN 1895)

(*From the Mezzotint by William Ward after John Hoppner*, 1797)

mendous prices that are secured for the choicest examples of the art. It is no unusual event nowadays for a mezzotint to reach three figures, and a few of those that have gained this distinction are:

W. Whiston Barney	Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire	£304 10 0
John Dean	Lady Elizabeth Herbert and Son	300 guineas *
William Dickinson	Mrs. Pelham feeding Chickens	472 10 0
,,	Elizabeth Taylor	185 guineas *
,,	Viscountess Crosbie (see p. 60)	609 0 0
,,	Mrs. Sheridan as St. Cecilia	252 0 0
John Dixon	Lady Susan O'Brien	260 guineas
Valentine Green	Lady Talbot	210 guineas *
,,	Duchess of Rutland (see p. 118)	1000 guineas *
,,	Viscountess Townshend	£472 10 0
,,	Jane, Countess of Harrington	367 0 0
,,	Lady Elizabeth Compton	280 0 0
,,	Mrs. Cosway	273 0 0
,,	Countess of Salisbury (see p. 120)	450 guineas *
,,	Lady Louisa Manners	141 15 0
,,	Lady Caroline Howard	462 0 0
,,	Lady Betty Delmé and Children (see p. 122)	920 guineas *
,,	The Ladies Waldegrave (see p. 124)	588 0 0
Joseph Grozer	Miss Frances Harris	180 guineas *
C. H. Hodges	Mrs. Musters as 'Hebe'	230 guineas *
John Jones	Edmund Burke	116 0 0
,,	Lady Caroline Price (see p. 14)	190 guineas *
,,	Mrs. Davenport	129 0 0
,,	Miss Kemble, in black dress	204 12 0
,,	Miss Kemble, in white dress	150 guineas *
Thomas Lupton	Ben Arthur (Liber Studiorum)	159 12 0
J. Spilsbury	Miss Jacobs	170 guineas *
J. Raphael Smith	Mrs. Carnac (see frontispiece)	1160 guineas †
,,	Lady Catherine Pelham-Clinton (see p. 12)	940 guineas *
,,	Countess of Warwick	221 0 0
,,	Mrs. Musters	380 guineas *
,,	Mrs. Payne-Galwey and Child	290 guineas *
,,	Countess Gower and Family	273 0 0
,,	Hon. Mrs. Stanhope	430 10 0
,,	Miss Cumberland (second state)	262 10 0
,,	Mrs. North	170 guineas
,,	Lady Hamilton, as a Bacchante	325 10 0
James Walker	Miss Frances Woodley	150 guineas *
,,	Lady Isabella Hamilton	441 0 0
,,	Mrs. Musters	320 0 0
James Ward	Children Bathing } the pair	360 guineas *
,,	Juvenile Retirement }	
William Ward	Daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland (see p. 126)	399 0 0
James Watson	Nelly O'Brien	204 0 0

* Blyth sale, March 1901. † Edgcumbe sale, April 1901.

James Watson	Duchess of Buccleuch and Daughter	300 guineas *
,,	Mrs. Abington, as the Comic Muse	199 10 0
Thomas Watson	Lady Bampfylde (see p. 58)	880 guineas *
,,	Marchioness Townshend, Mrs. Beresford, and Mrs. Gardiner (see p. 128)	440 guineas *
John Young	Lady Anne Lambton and Family	325 10 0

* Blyth sale, March 1901.

But notwithstanding these very high prices, we may repeat that excellent examples of mezzotint by the best engravers, though of the less sought for subjects, are to be found at reasonable figures.

The fine work by the best nineteenth-century mezzotinters is steadily advancing in money value, and the favourite prints by Cousins, Lucas (translations of Constable's landscapes), S. W. Reynolds, Say, and Charles Turner, can rely upon a keen market. Already high amounts are being quoted, and among the prints that have recently changed hands are: by Samuel Cousins—*The Valentine* (very rare), £126; *Mrs. Braddyll*, 110 guineas*; *Countess Grosvenor*, 52 guineas*; *Countess Gower*, 180 guineas*; *Lady Acland and Children*, £90, 6s.; *Lady Grey and Children*, 85 guineas*; and *Master Lambton*, 160 guineas* (see p. 64). By Samuel Cousins and William Walker—*Robert Burns*, 80 guineas.* By David Lucas—*Young Waltonians*, £17; *Dedham Vale*, £100, 16s.; *The Lock*, £109, 4s.; and *Salisbury Cathedral*, £105. By S. W. Reynolds—*Duchess of Bedford*, £390; and *Mrs. Arbuthnot*, £72. By W. Say—*Lady Mildmay and Child* (see p. 130), 360 guineas*; and *Miss Kitty Stephens*, 39 guineas. And by Charles Turner—*Lady Louisa Manners*, £200; *Mrs. Scott-Waring and Children*, £25, 4s.; *Lady Cholmondeley and Child*, £23; *Mrs. Stratton*, £26, 5s.; *Lady Hood*, 90 guineas*; *The Marlborough Family* (large plate), £90, 6s.; and *Lord Nelson*, after Hoppner, £71, 8s.

* Blyth sale, March 1901.

MARCHIONESS TOWNSHEND, MRS. BERESFORD, AND MRS. GARDINER

(SOLD FOR 440 GUINEAS, MARCH 1901)

(*From the Mezzotint by Thomas Watson after Sir J. Reynolds*, 1776)

Prints after Reynolds, Hoppner, and Romney, if in good condition, may be reckoned to rank high, and some popular ones after Peters also sell well. The best prints after Morland, when not in colours, may cost from £10 to £20, according to subject, quality, and state, though at times they may be met with cheaper.

Just now, prints after Meissonier are changing hands at very high prices, and of *La Rixe*, a finest 'remarque' state is worth from £120 to £150, and a second state on vellum, without the remarque, from £40 to £50. The print '1814' has sold for 150 guineas.

STIPPLE ENGRAVINGS.—Whatever may be said for or against stipple engravings, they are of great interest in the present-day salerooms, and fetch good prices. Many prints in stipple, by even the most accomplished engravers, are inexpensive, but the few prices enumerated below are for fine specimens, and, *as far as known, printed in monochrome:*

Francesco Bartolozzi.	Lady Smyth and Children (see p. 66)	£41 0 0
,, .	The Months, after Hamilton (ten by Bartolozzi and two by Gardner) .	145 guineas
,, .	Emily Pott as 'Thaïs' . . .	17 17 0
,, .	Eliza Farren, Countess of Derby .	100 guineas *
,, .	Maria Cosway	9 15 0
,, .	Jane, Countess of Harrington, and Children	92 0 0
,, .	Hon. Miss Bingham	63 0 0
,, .	Countess Spencer	9 10 0
,, .	St. Giles's Beauty } . . .	14 10 0
,, .	St. James's Beauty }	
,, .	Simplicity (Miss Gwatkin) . .	28 7 0
,, .	Lady Elizabeth Foster (see p. 66) .	54 0 0†
,, .	Lord Burghersh	36 guineas *
Thomas Burke . .	Duchess of Richmond (after Downman)	5 10 0
,, . .	Lady Rushout and Daughter (see p. 16)	37 guineas
,, . .	Lady Rushout and Daughter (at another sale)	32 10 0
Thomas Cheesman .	Mrs. Mountain	4 10 0

* Blyth sale, March 1901. † Edgcumbe sale, April 1901.

Thomas Cheesman	Lady Hamilton (The Spinster) (see p. 70)	£28 0 0
,,	'The Sempstress'	75 0 0
John Condé	Miss Jackson	8 15 0
,,	Hon. Mrs. Bouverie	7 0 0
,,	Mrs. Fitzherbert	35 10 0
,,	Mrs. Fitzherbert (at another sale)	24 0 0
William Dickinson	Mary Robinson (Perdita)	131 5 0
Francis Haward	Mrs. Siddons as 'The Tragic Muse'	140 guineas *
,,	The Infant Academy	16 16 0
Charles Knight	Idleness / Industry	16 16 0
,,	Cupid's Revenge / Cupid Disarmed	8 8 0
William Nutter	A Bacchante (Mrs. Hartley)	61 0 0
,,	Lady Beauchamp	22 0 0
John Ogborne	Mrs. Jordan as 'The Romp'	31 10 0
,,	Mrs. Jordan as 'The Country Girl'	16 16 0
Wm. Wynne Ryland	Judgment of Paris	6 10 0
,,	Triumph of Venus	6 6 0
P. Simon	The Sleeping Nymph (after Opie)	29 guineas
J. Raphael Smith	A Widow	6 10 0
,,	Delia in Town (after Morland)	14 5 0
Peltro Wm. Tomkins	Maternal Affection	7 10 0
,,	English Fireside / French Fireside	40 0 0
,,	Hobbinol and Ganderetta	6 6 0
,,	'He Sleeps'	6 0 0
,,	Mrs. Siddons (after Downman) (see p. 70)	26 0 0
William Ward	Thoughts on Matrimony	84 0 0
Caroline Watson	Miss Bower (after Hoppner)	5 10 0
,,	Hon. Mrs. Stanhope as 'Contemplation'	44 guineas *
Charles Wilkin	Lady Catherine Howard	27 6 0
,,	Lady Charlotte Campbell (see p. 74)	29 8 0
,,	Duchess of Rutland	10 15 0
,,	Viscountess Andover	20 10 0
,,	Lady Langham	32 0 0

* Blyth sale, March 1901.

Good impressions in brown, after Wheatley's *Cries of London*, work out at from about £4, 4s. to £13, 13s. each. At the Blyth sale the set of thirteen, in bistre, sold for 105 guineas; and in colours the set sold for 1000 guineas, June 11th, 1901. We do not propose to venture on giving prices for impressions printed in colour, for there is no knowing how much further prices may yet advance; but we will just recall that in May 1899 *Lady Hamilton, as Nature*, by H. Meyer, after

LADY MILDMAY AND CHILD

(SOLD FOR 360 GUINEAS, MARCH 1901)

(*From the Mezzotint by William Say after John Hoppner*, 1803)

Romney, reached the, then, record figure of 470 guineas. The same impression had been bought in at the same auction rooms (Messrs. Robinson & Fisher's), in July 1898, for 210 guineas.

MODERN ETCHINGS.—The etchings by some of the artists of recent years are deservedly attracting much notice, and although the prices vary considerably, a few special ones may be mentioned. Brunet Debaines's etchings, after B. W. Leader's well-known departing-day landscapes, cost from £12 to £20. A collector of Sir Seymour Haden's work has paid as much as £49 for *A River in Ireland* (one of twelve impressions printed). *The Shere Mill Pond* is another very expensive plate; *The Breaking up of the Agamemnon* (see p. 34) may be put down at about £27, and the *Calais Pier*, after Turner, at about £50. At times, Haden's etchings of the less important subjects change hands at prices as low as a sovereign. The etchings of Axel H. Haig can also be relied upon for bringing in substantial sums; and during the years 1898-99 *Mont St. Michel* fetched £36, 15s.; *In the Aisles of Chartres*, £19; *The Quiet Hour*, £23, 10s.; and *The Vesper Bell*, £45. In July 1899 R. W. Macbeth's etchings, *Marlow Ferry*, after Fred. Walker, and *The Harvest Moon*, after G. H. Mason, realised £9, 9s. and £18, 10s. respectively, and their value is appreciating.

Good examples of caricatures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sell at from £3 upwards; but topographical prints are sometimes to be picked up exceedingly cheaply, though at the sale of the Wilson collection of London Topography in April 1898 some high prices were obtained. Occasionally good topographical prints, in colours, fetch as much as £30 apiece. Historical prints as a general rule are not dear

The interesting original prices inscribed on two mezzotinted portraits of *Gustavus, Viscount Boyne*, after Hogarth, may be recalled as curiosities. The plate engraved by Andrew Miller is lettered "Price, 2s. 8½d."; and the one by Michael Ford "Price, 5s. 5d."

For comparison with the high prices recently paid for fine mezzotint portraits of ladies, the following quotations from the sale catalogue of Sir Thomas Lawrence's collection of prints, May 1830, will be of unusual interest:—

332.	Eight, of Ladies — Lady Elizabeth Herbert, Countess Spencer, etc.	£3	6 o
333.	Six, of Ladies — Lady Louisa Manners, Lady Charles Spencer, L'Allegro (Mrs. Hall), Lady Mary Leslie, touched proof, etc.	2	3 o
334.	Eight, of Ladies — Diana, Viscountess Crosbie, Mary, Duchess of Ancaster, Queen Charlotte, and Princess Royal, after West	3	3 o
335.	Five, of Ladies—the three Ladies Waldegrave, Duchess of Devonshire, Duchess of Rutland, Lady Jane Halliday, etc.	3	10 o

CHAPTER X

THE PRINT ROOM OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

WE propose, in conclusion, to give the amateur an introduction to the national collections of prints and drawings that are carefully preserved for the public use and enjoyment at the British Museum —collections that, in some respects, are unsurpassed by any other cabinet in Europe.

The Department of Prints and Drawings dates back to the year 1808, when the collections, scattered throughout the library, were brought together to form a separate department under the Keepership of William Alexander, an artist of some distinction, who had accompanied Lord Macartney's Embassy to China in 1792-94. Since Alexander's day, six officials have presided over the destinies of the Print Room, the present Keeper being Mr. Sidney Colvin, who, as an expert, enjoys a high reputation on the Continent and in America, as well as in England.

For many years the prints were housed at the north-west corner of the building; but when the White Wing was erected at the south-east angle, some eighteen or twenty years ago, accommodation was provided to meet the requirements of the ever-expanding Print Department, and the move was effected in 1885. Two years later—to be exact, on June 23rd, 1887—the handsome Students' Room (see p. 136) was opened, and it will bear

favourable comparison with any similar room in Europe. It is excellently lighted from the top, and by windows in the north wall, and for dark and foggy days a sufficient electric light installation has been provided. More than seven thousand students go to this room annually to consult the collections, and their many and miscellaneous needs are as far as possible met. An air of quiet pervades the place, so that visitors can prosecute their inquiries and pursue their studies under the most favourable conditions, receiving the best help the officials can give them.

Although the Print Room itself is fully furnished with cabinets, wherein are stored many thousands of prints and drawings, it must not be thought that all the collections find house-room in this one saloon, for there are several other rooms where prints are stored, while some of the most treasured possessions are preserved in the officers' private studies. Owing to the rapid growth of the department, however, every available nook and corner has had to be utilised for the storage of the prints, and the housing of these national riches will become a serious problem, which will have to be faced in the near future. To make the full extent of the department known, we must mention the very fine exhibition gallery that has been specially fitted for the display of the treasures possessed by the department. The preparation of an exhibition for this gallery requires great thought, and is a work of much labour and care; and each series of prints or drawings is allowed to remain on view for about three years. The gallery was first opened in 1888, when an assemblage of Chinese and Japanese paintings was exhibited such as had never before been seen in the Western world. This exhibition was succeeded by a display of water-colour draw-

ings, chiefly English, and mostly acquired during the present Keepership. Then followed a selection of drawings by old masters, from the extremely important collection formed by the late John Malcolm of Poltalloch, to which allusion will be made later, and this was succeeded by a complete series of the etchings of Rembrandt, of an all-round excellence that no other cabinet in the world can surpass.

The departmental staff is not a large one, and when it is remembered that, besides satisfying the needs of students, the officials have to deal with thousands of acquisitions every year, and that each item requires to be registered, stamped, placed, and indexed, and further, that much time and labour are devoted to the preparation and publication of works bearing upon the collections, it will be understood that the staff does not spend an idle time. When the reader learns that comparatively recently a collection of some 13,000 sketches and prints by George Cruikshank was bequeathed to the department by the artist's widow, and a cabinet of book plates (*ex libris*) containing about 150,000 specimens was bequeathed by the late Sir Wollaston Franks, he will still better realise the amount of work that has to be dealt with.

The collections have been augmenting, by gift and bequest, at an ever-increasing rate as the nineteenth century advanced, and many have been the nation's benefactors. Besides these two channels of acquisition, Parliament allows an annual grant for purchases; but as the sum at the disposal of the Keeper is comparatively small, while the number of desirable items which come into the market is great, and as the competitors at the salerooms are numerous, and the purses of the Continental and American buyers are deep, it will be seen that

the department is very severely handicapped. Still, should anything very exceptional arise, there are the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the House of Commons to whom a final appeal for funds can be made; and one of the last acts of the Liberal Parliament that came to an end in 1895, was to grant £25,000 for the purchase of the almost incomparable private collection of drawings and engravings by old masters, formed by the late John Malcolm, to which reference has already been made. Large as this sum may appear, experts have no hesitation in saying the collection would have realised much more had it been brought to the hammer.

Many people believe that by virtue of a Copyright Act, similar to the one for books, the Museum claims a copy of each print as it is published. But there is no such print Copyright Act, and the only means of adding to the collections are, as stated, by purchase, gift, and bequest.

The almost unaccountable number of items possessed by the department are preserved in between 7000 and 8000 receptacles — portfolios, albums, cases, etc.—and these, as they are required, are brought for the use of the student. The department also possesses a reference library of about 3000 works on art, which the student can freely consult.

It was by no means an easy task to arrive at the best way of arranging and grouping the various possessions and collections, and it is surprising the number of visitors who think the prints should be arranged to suit their individual wishes and needs. This is especially the case with magazine article writers, who, having prepared their articles, go to the Print Room and expect to find groups of prints or drawings that will suitably illustrate their subjects,

THE BRITISH MUSEUM PRINT ROOM

placed ready to their hand without the trouble of searching.

First of all, the prints and drawings are grouped into schools — Italian, German, French, English, etc.—and to the artists of each school is assigned an index. Then each school is sub-divided according to the various classes of work—(1) the artists' own handiwork: drawings, etchings, engravings, and lithographs; and (2) prints in all styles after the pictures, etc., of artists.

Besides the general collections there are special ones brought together to supply the constant requirements of the public. First of these is the exceedingly rich and valuable collection of portraits of personages of all times and of all countries, Occidental and Oriental. That of English celebrities alone fills more than a hundred and fifty portfolios and cases, and the portraits are grouped according to the various classes of society, from the highest to the lowest. Here the student can examine the features of the Sovereigns of our country from Alfred the Great to Edward VII. He can make acquaintance with the flower of the aristocracy, with the ladies of rank and fashion, with the clergy of the land, or with the statesmen. He can study the faces of the soldiers and sailors who have helped to build up the Empire and have died in its cause. He can see the men of literature, the professors of law and of science, and the artists who have afforded us the means of enjoying the presentments of these people of the past. Or he can turn to the lower rungs of the social ladder and look over the portraits of mountebanks and jugglers who have earned their livings at shows and fairs, or of highwaymen and criminals who have terminated their careers at Tyburn.

Another special and valuable collection is the one

containing prints that have satirised the historical and social events and movements of the last two or three hundred years. This collection is arranged in chronological sequence, and to it come historians in search of sidelights on the events and times upon which they propose to write. Again, much curious information may be gleaned from the great collection of playing cards, which is by far the most important in the country, and can be equalled by, perhaps, only one similar collection on the Continent. Besides these collections, which throw unexpected illumination on the events of the past, there are those of historical prints (British and foreign), which are in constant demand. And another most interesting and curious collection is that of engraved English and Continental fans, brought together with much pains, and presented to the department by the late Lady Charlotte Schreiber.

April 21st, 1880, was a very unusual Wednesday in the history of the Print Department, for on that day one of the rooms of the Museum was converted into an auction mart, and a number of duplicate prints were offered to the highest bidder to provide the funds required to purchase the very fine collection of views and plans of Old London that had been formed by Frederick Crace. This collection, which requires sixty portfolios to contain it, was considered too great a prize to escape the Museum net, and so exceptional efforts were made (and successfully made) to secure it. The prints are constantly being asked for, and are of inestimable service to the public, for in them can be studied the growth and development of this huge metropolis from as far back as the days of Queen Elizabeth.

The public little know how much they are in-

debted to the Print Room of the British Museum when they read their books and magazines (whether illustrated or not), when they attend lectures, or even when they listen to sermons.

The seven thousand or more visitors who annually pass some of their time in the Print Room comprise people of all walks of life—from His Majesty's Cabinet Ministers to the hard-working artist who, perhaps, finds it difficult to make both ends meet. Authors go to seek materials for their books, publishers to find illustrations for the works they are about to issue, painters for authorities for the settings of their pictures, and theatrical managers and actors for hints as to the costumes they should use. It may almost be said that nothing of importance occurs in the country but it sends visitors to the Print Room, whether it be a Royal marriage, a historical controversy, a military tournament, or a jubilee. At the time of the Diamond Jubilee the department was invaded by those who took part in the memorable costume ball given by the Duchess of Devonshire, who consulted the collections so that their historical dresses might be quite accurate.

And besides the visitors just named, there are the *bonâ fide* students of prints who go to increase their knowledge of the world of engraving, to train themselves in the essential qualities of good prints, and to examine specimens in a brilliant state of preservation. Among these are to be found many foreigners whose industry and studious habits are very noticeable. Many amateurs take prints of their own with them and ask permission to compare them with the specimens possessed by the department.

To give the student who has never visited the Print Room a slight idea of the richness and

fulness of some of the individual collections, let us call to mind a few. The specimens of early Italian nielli and engraving excel those in any other cabinet in the world; the engravings by the early German masters are in the very front rank of importance; the unrivalled uniformly high standard of excellence of the Rembrandt etchings we have already alluded to; the etchings by Dutch and Flemish artists contained in the well-known Sheepshanks collection are as good as any other museum can boast; the Hogarth engravings require twenty cases to hold them; the prints after the immortal Turner demand the services of twenty-seven portfolios and cases; the prints after Sir Joshua Reynolds take up twelve ponderous albums; while, at the time of writing, the various collections of English and foreign mezzotints occupy more than a hundred and twenty albums and cases.

The custom of extra-illustrating, or 'grangerising' books—that is, of collecting prints of all kinds that will illustrate a literary work, and placing them as accompaniments of the text—has of late years come again extensively into fashion; and it is a custom that has much to recommend it, as it gives a direct purpose to the amateur in his work. When the prints have all been brought together, the usual plan of procedure is to cut the book up into separate leaves, and to inlay them into sheets of paper of a size equal to that of the largest of the prints that will be used, and then to inlay the smaller prints into sheets of paper of the full size. The prints are then placed opposite to the pages they illustrate, and the whole (prints and text) are bound into convenient volumes.

The Print Department possesses several works that have been most elaborately 'grangerised'—namely, Clarendon's 'History of the Great Re-

bellion'; Whitelock's 'Historical Memorials of the Years 1625-60'; and Pennant's 'Account of London.' The first two were bequeathed by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester in 1834, and the last one was compiled and bequeathed by J. C. Crowle. The Clarendon is comprised in eight large heavy volumes, the Whitelock in two, and the Pennant in fourteen. Besides these works, the department possesses two valuable 'grangerised' copies of Byron's 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.'

We have said that many writers and publishers go to the Print Room in search of materials for their books; and in order that the 'finds' may be turned to the best account, the Director of the Museum, under certain conditions, grants permission for prints to be photographed that they may be reproduced as book illustrations. Twenty years ago it was only an occasional event for a print or drawing to be photographed; but with the improvements in photographic processes the work has so extended that now the entire time of one of the staff is taken up in satisfying the requests of photographers.

Generally speaking, the department is weakest in the work of modern artists. As a rule, the Trustees do not purchase prints by (or after) living men, believing that either the artists or the possessors of modern prints will present or bequeath specimens to the nation; and many artists might follow the excellent example of the late Samuel Cousins, R.A., who, one day in 1872, went to the Museum and made the nation a present of an almost complete set of his mezzotint engravings.

In this brief and cursory way we have endeavoured to place before the amateur some of the advantages and possibilities that the Print

Room holds out to him. But no amount of description will compare with a personal acquaintance; and should the collector wish to avail himself of the opportunities thus thrown open to him, let him apply by letter to the Director of the Museum for a student's ticket that he may pursue his studies, and let that application be supported by the recommendation of a householder, when in all probability he will be put in the way of obtaining admission to an art cabinet of the highest importance, where he may gain a knowledge of prints such as no other institution in the country can offer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Bibliography has been arranged under subjects and artists' names, and not under the names of the authors whose works are quoted. The entries have been classified as follows: (I) Books dealing with groups of artists, and with schools; (II) Books devoted to styles of engraving, and to other subjects of interest to collectors; (III) Books upon engraved portraits; and (IV) Books, each devoted to one artist.

I

LE PEINTRE-GRAVEUR, by Adam Bartsch. 21 vols. and supplement. Vienna, 1803-21. 8vo.

For etchings and engravings of the Dutch and Flemish, German, and Italian Schools.

LE PEINTRE-GRAVEUR, by J. D. Passavant. 6 vols. Leipzig (Weigel), 1860-64. 8vo.

Comprises the history of engraving on wood and on metal until towards the end of the sixteenth century.

LE PEINTRE-GRAVEUR FRANÇAIS, by A. P. F. Robert-Dumesnil. 11 vols. Paris (Bouchard-Huzard), 1835-71. 8vo.

For artists born in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.

KÜNSTLER-LEXIGON, by Dr. G. K. Nagler. 22 vols. Munich, 1835-52. 8vo.

For artists of all schools.

DIE MONOGRAMMISTEN, by Dr. G. K. Nagler. 5 vols. Munich, 1858-79. 8vo.

For artists of all schools.

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